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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Ave atque Vale

In surrendering the editorship of the *Modern Churchman*, Dr. Major severs the last remaining link between him and the modernist movement in the Church of England, of which he has been the centre for more than fifty years. Generous tributes to his work have been paid by the Archbishops of both provinces, and his services to the cause of Anglican liberalism were amply recognized by his friends when he resigned as Principal of Ripon Hall and Chairman of the Modern Churchmen's Conference. To his pupils, however, he gave and revealed more of himself than to anyone else. With him true religion, sound learning, and the grace of good manners were inseparable; that was the atmosphere of Ripon Hall under his sway and that was what he wished its *alumni* to carry away to the parishes where they would serve. In the first half of this century many young men passed through a night of intellectual doubt before they could in good conscience offer themselves for ordination. Dr. Major, not so much by force of argument as by the inspiration of a luminously honest and square personality, dissolved any lingering hesitations. A large number of his pupils would be ready to confess that his championship of liberal Christianity made their ordination possible and, if they have subsequently served the Church to its advantage, the Church owes it to Dr. Major. Through the creation of Ripon Hall he opened a door to ordination for men who wished to follow Maurice, Kingsley and Creighton in the pattern of their ministry.

It is difficult for others to take up the direction of a movement of which one man has for so long been the centre and directing force. Dr. Major in a large degree was the Modern Churchmen's Union, the Modern Churchmen's Conference, and the Modern Churchman. He fought, and fought successfully, for the rights of learning within the Church of England, experiment in worship, and the preservation of that internal liberty

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and tolerance secured to the Church by its establishment. His theological orientation is that of Harnack, while in ritual he favoured the dignified simplicity of the early Tractarians. To many Anglicans, modernism is synonymous with Liberal Protestantism and on that account obsolete. They would consider that with Dr. Major's resignation the *Modern Churchman* could well be discontinued as a journal of liberal thought and practice. No one—least of all perhaps men of a liberal outlook—would wish to cumber the ground with a putrefying corpse. As Dr. Major himself noted, Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus* more than anything else discredited the liberal Protestant estimate of the mission and message of Jesus. But as Schweitzer himself pointed out in 1950, 'Modern Protestantism substitutes its view of the Kingdom of God and its coming for the eschatological view which Jesus presented as if it really represented the original. Historically both are wrong; *but religiously both are right!*' On this Dr. Major commented, 'Liberal Protestantism has won spiritually and ethically, but it has not won historically.'

When we turn to ecclesiastical politics and the concerns of the Protestant Churches, in particular to those of the Church of England, the need for the witness of the liberal Christian and the presentation of his claims seems to be more urgent than ever before. The Church is faced with a national desertion from the Christian tradition of worship, thought, and practice, and a progressively diminution of Christian influences in the social, moral, and cultural life of the nation. To meet these adversities, ecclesiastical leaders pursue a policy of increased institutional efficiency, disciplined uniformity, and bureaucratic administraton. Many years ago Professor Lake pointed out that the true divisions in the Church were not between Catholics, Evangelicals, and Modernists but between Traditionalists, Institutionalists and Experimentalists. At present the Institutionalists' policy and temper are predominant. There is surely a clamant need for creative thought, experiment, and prophecy within the Church if it is to be the spirit-bearing body, the true Church of Christ. One who is not a member of the Union, Canon Alec Vidler, Dean of King's College, Cambridge, has given apt expression to this need in a recent letter to *The Times* concerning Canon Law revision. He writes:

> 'What the Church of England needs is not more order and discipline but a spirit of radical experimentation which would be very disorderly and rebellious at least in its early manifestations. In my view both the clergy and laity of the Church of England are, with rare exceptions, monotonously conventional and depressingly docile and the revision of the Canon Law is calculated to make them more so. The sooner it is abandoned the better. Anyhow, let it be suspended until there is such an outbreak of dangerous thinking and riotous living in the Church that there is some sense in proposing to set limits to it.'

Epigoni as we are conscious of being, compared with Dr. Major and the giants of his generation, we have undertaken to continue the publication of the *Modern Churchman* for these reasons. Our success will depend

upon the support of liberal scholars and writers by their contributions and of sympathetic readers by their subscriptions.

The Canon Law Issue

It is useful to be reminded by one of our most distinguished scholars of the historical and constitutional background of Canon Law revision. Professor Norman Sykes' article, published in this issue, is valuable in that respect. His conclusions as to the innocuous character of the proposals will not be so universally shared. Discussions are in progress between representatives of the Union and other organizations on the basis of the following three principles:

(1) The code should be reduced to the minimum. Those Canons that are essential to the right ordering and administration of the Church should be given full legal authority. Those intended for more general guidance, or that are of less importance, should be kept separate and given the status of norms rather than of laws. These should have the same kind of moral authority that at present attaches to such Resolutions of the Convocations as are not reduced to act.

(2) Legislation should be avoided that would radically alter the ethos of the Church. For example, care should be taken that the Canons do not harden the divisions between our own Church and others in Christendom with whom there is a possibility of better relations. Care should also be taken to avoid strengthening autocratic tendencies in the Church.

(3) No Canon should be accepted if it is repugnant to any considerable element in the Church. One suggestion is that the Canons should require a two-thirds majority of the Convocations for their final approval.

The adoption of these standards would involve a thorough revision of the revision. Yet the use of sound criteria of judgment might, in the long run, mean a saving of time. One of the criticisms the future will make of the revision, if it goes through in its present form, is that it does not implement any recognizable body of principle. It has more the appearance of a higgledy-piggledy, incorporating the whimsies of all and sundry. Here the Canons smile upon Anglo-Catholics, there they throw a sop to Evangelicals, elsewhere they cast a grim look upon liberals and hastily withdraw.

At numerous points the proposed Canons touch on the sensitive—not to say the sore—spots of the different parties in the Church. To that extent they have already aroused much heartburning and suspicion, amongst Evangelicals especially. There has been a healthy tendency in recent years to avoid party strife, than which nothing is more debilitating to the life of the Church, and there was every hope that this growth in tolerance and understanding would continue. As it is, we are being treated to the unedifying spectacle of the more extreme members of the two main parties trying to write in their own particular shibboleths, gain-

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ing a point here by conceding another there, perhaps, but hardening when anything that seems fundamental to their own position is challenged. This is not the way to preserve and enlarge the comprehensiveness of the Church of England, nor will it produce that state of orderliness which is the desire of tidy and small minds. For better or for worse the parties exist in the Church, but they are not what they were. The majority of lay people care little about them: it may be because they often do not understand them, but it would make little difference if they did. The indications are that the younger clergy sit much less closely to the older party lines, and this is even more noticeable amongst those who are coming forward for ordination. Their sympathies are engaged elsewhere.

That there is a growing volume of disquiet on these matters is becoming clear from the correspondence columns of our more responsible newspapers. One such letter we reproduce below from the *Manchester Guardian* of May 9th. None of the signatories is known to us, but it is a fair guess that some, if not all, would be found on the Catholic rather than the Evangelical wing. They write:

> Sir,—Since doctrinal agreement appears now to be regarded in the Church of England as an unrealizable ideal, and our differences must perforce be cloaked in ambiguous formulas, is it not a little hypocritical to attempt to impose upon ourselves a form of external liturgical and ceremonial uniformity which merely covers up the true state of things?
>
> Many of the clergy, both to left and right of the centre, cannot but regard the present pressure of canon law revision, in particular that which concerns 'lawful authority', as a party move designed to squeeze the Evangelical and Catholic wings into a central strait-jacket, and resent it accordingly. Once grant comprehensiveness and it is hard to prevent its expressing itself in its manifold diversity, yet that is exactly what is now being attempted.
>
> All the clergy have taken the oath of obedience to lawful authority. Not all have interpreted it in the same way. It is now sought to impose an interpretation which many have never envisaged when they made their declaration. They have received holy orders and accepted offices upon terms which they find about to be altered in mid-course. There will be many searchings of conscience and much mental anguish. It is much to be hoped that should this canon in its proposed form become law, there will be no kind of covert or overt duress. Such would be a grave transgression of justice, and might well, like former attempts to force consciences in the direction of uniformity, defeat its own ends. All men resent compulsion in religious matters.
>
> If this interpretation of lawful authority is made retrospective (that is, cover oaths and declarations made before the passing of the new canons), or even if the oath were to be repeated, it is open to serious doubt whether it would be held morally binding on the conscience. Surely a change in the content or terms of an oath absolves the declarer from its obligations. It would be ironic indeed if on the morning after the canons became law we were to wake up to find ourselves absolved from obedience to lawful authority of any kind at all
>
> It is hard to discover what the framers of this canon are hoping to achieve. The most it can achieve is uniformity in the parishes in one diocese, and a different uniformity in every other diocese, according to the theological whim

of the doicesan. The clergy will be delivered bound hand and foot to the bishops. That may or may not be an advantage, but who will be the lawful authority to the bishops?

It may not yet be too late to urge caution upon these earnest legislators. They should weigh carefully the lessons of former attempts at coercion in Anglican history. The humiliation of 1928 is a recent warning of the perils of bringing controversial Church legislation before Parliament.

Finally, is it too much for the humble parish priest to ask his bishop to trust him a little more, and to be allowed a little respite from harryings and shocks? How many souls is this blatter of legislation going to save? It would be a relief if we could be left alone to get on with our work.

Yours, etc.,

Thomas, O.S.B. oblate, Master, S.S.C.; J. F. Thomson, Vicar of St. Margaret's Burnley; W. Hum, Vicar of All Souls', Leeds; James O. Knowles, Rector of St. John's, Miles Platting; Alban C. M. Howard, Vicar of Barlby, Selby; Peter E. Blagdon-Gamlen, Vicar of St. Bartholomew's, Derby; J. E. Foster, Vicar of St. Mary's, Bishophill Junior, York; L. Whiteside, Vicar of Clifford, Yorkshire; W. F. Kennedy, Rector of St. Denys and St. Margaret's, York; Wm. E. Knifton, parish priest, St. John Baptist's, Barnsley; Patrick J. Wiltshire, Vicar of Altofts; I. O. Jay, Vicar of Purston, Pontefract.

The Growth and Administration of Canon Law

Commenting on *An Introduction to Canon Law in the Church of England* (Hodder & Stoughton; 8/6), a recent article in the *Church of England Newspaper* of May 10th remarks:

> The Church's legal system grew up over the centuries under the hands of wise leaders, experienced judges and learned commentators. It was administered by highly trained professionals in the subject who were also well versed in theology. It rested upon the principles that the only kind of law tolerable in the spiritual sphere is one that is highly flexible and can be regarded more as a norm for general guidance than as a regulation for absolute obedience. The maximum possible scope should be allowed for local custom and private initiative. Great issues should be dealt with carefully and freedom allowed in details.
>
> These principles are such as immediately convince by their inherent and obvious common sense and liberality. At one point, however, Canon Kemp does slip a little. In medieval times the subject matter of Canon Law was so much larger than it ever can be again that a corps of professional canonists more than justified its existence. That body disappeared from its home in this country in Knightrider Street without effective protest and without leaving a trace because more and more of its functions were taken over by the State system of justice. Its *raison d'être* vanished. Were it revived by artificial respiration it could only make a nuisance of itself by reason of not having enough to do. God forbid that we should ever have sufficient litigation in the Church to require a special branch of the legal profession!
>
> Whether a process of legislation by the shovelful such as we are now witnessing can ever produce a system such as Canon Kemp describes is more than doubtful. Slow and painstaking development over a long period is of the

> essence of it. One of the main criticisms of the present draft is precisely that it does not wear the happy aspect Canon Kemp wishes to see.

We are now being told that Canons are not to be regarded as 'laws' involving penalties, except in extreme cases, but as 'norms' to be used in a more general way for guidance. In that case the Canon enforcing the new declaration of obedience should go because it completely contradicts that theory. Also Canon 9 should be drastically reconsidered. At present it reads that 'any infraction of, or neglect to observe' Canon Law, 'shall be restrained or punished by penalties as follows. Namely, in the case of the clergy, degradation, deprivation, suspension, inhibition or monition; and in the case of the laity as aforesaid by removal from such office or membership as aforesaid, refusal of the benefits claimed, or exclusion for an appropriate period from the Holy Communion.'

It must be admitted that this swinging, sweeping judgment on *any* infraction or neglect to observe does not give much encouragement for regarding the Canons as norms.

How Christian is Britain?

In February of this year the *News Chronicle* undertook a Gallop Poll into the religious beliefs and practices of men and women from sixteen years of age and upward, of all denominations and none, in all parts of the country. The results of the Poll, which it is claimed was the most extensive of its kind ever made, were embodied in three articles by William Gregory in the *News Chronicle* of April 15th, 16th and 17th.

It was to be expected that one of the results would be to show that the masses are out of touch with the Churches. We have been told so often that we live in a post-Christian age, that the majority of our contemporaries are indifferent, if not hostile, to religious beliefs and values, while it is a matter of common observation that most of them exercise their privilege of staying away from church or chapel. Even among those who acknowledge religious belief the tendency to absenteeism is strong: only one in seven attended a place of worship on the Sunday previous to the Poll.

On the other hand, no one with pastoral experience will be surprised to learn that those with professed antipathy to religious belief are a comparatively small minority. Mr. Gregory writes:

> Although the scientists have severely tested the Christian and shaken some of his beliefs, atheism has not profited to any appreciable extent. Only 6 per cent, one in seventeen, regard themselves as atheists. The overwhelming majority (78 per cent) in Britain to-day affirm their belief in God. For every atheist there are thirteen believers.

Whether the 78 per cent are as firm in their affirmation as the 6 per cent in their denial may be doubted; after all, some sort of belief in some sort of God need not, and does not in many cases, involve very much in the

way of conviction. Even so, the proportion of nominal belief is higher than might be expected. More surprising is the next step:

> Those who believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God far outnumber those who dismiss Jesus as 'just a man' or 'just a story' by nearly five to one. (The figures are: 'Son of God', 60 per cent (under 21), 71 per cent (over 21); 'just a man', 8 per cent and 9 per cent; 'just a story', 11 per cent and 6 per cent.)

Moreover, in regard to one of the most crucial points of religious belief to-day, 54 per cent believe in life after death, and if it is difficult for the rest to accept the life hereafter, only one in six is prepared to assert that life ends at the grave. It might also be regarded as a healthy sign—or it might not— that 'only one in three accepts that there is a devil; of the rest, the majority positively reject the idea'.

On these facts alone it might seem that the prospect for organized religion in this country is not so bleak as it is sometimes made to appear. There is at least something to build on, a substratum of belief or half-belief which might become productive of a more positive and active Christianity if the Churches knew how to seize their opportunity.

Apathy or Allergy?

What comes out most clearly, however, is that the overwhelming majority (85 per cent of all ages) are in no doubt at all that to be a Christian it is not necessary to go to church, as against 8 per cent under 21 and 11 per cent over 21 who take the opposite view. It is this, of course, which has received particular attention in the religious press and elsewhere. The *Manchester Guardian* in a leading article commented as follows:

> The disparity between the number who say they believe and the number who regularly attend public worship is too great. It is, perhaps most of all, because the majority do not feel fully committed. . . . We do not feel committed sometimes because we are out of the habit of church-going, sometimes because the habit of church-going has itself become a substitute for faith, and often because commitment and Christian action require effort. It is true, of course, that a man or woman can be a good Christian without attending services or being a member of a church. Loving one's neighbours—truly a difficult matter at the best of times—and the concept of public service are far from confined to practising Christians or to people who formally adhere to any religion. One may agree with the 85 per cent in the Gallup poll who said that a Christian need not go to church; but one may at the same time wonder a little wryly how many were finding an easy excuse for themselves. For most who actively wish to carry out Christ's teaching the Churches are a help. Unless one's senses are unduly dulled, one cannot regularly attend their services without learning more of the meaning of the Scriptures, being reminded of one's daily responsibility, and being refreshed by the act of collective worship.

It was only to be expected that the *Guardian's* admission that 'a man or woman can be a good Christian without attending services or being

a member of a church' provoked considerable dissent, some of it well and forcibly expressed. The editor's reply is worth quoting:

> We are sorry if the passage on which our critics concentrate was unclear. Its point was that for most people who actively wish to carry out Christ's teaching the churches are a help. Faith is greatly reinforced by church-going, which is an integral part of Christian life. In so far as we implied that a full Christian life was possible without church membership, we deserve the rebuke of our correspondents.
>
> But we must stand by the qualification which we included—that a man or woman can be a good Christian without attending services or being a member of a church. To act in one's daily life in accordance with Christ's teaching is, to many people, as important as to attend public worship. The unhappy experience of at least some among the younger generations, especially among those who have served in the forces, is that Christian conduct is as often forthcoming from those who are not church members as from those who are. They have, as a result, felt better able to be of public service outside the Church.
>
> Our hope must be that among coming generations church membership and Christian practice in worldly affairs will fully coincide. The ideal, however, is exceedingly hard to attain.

It must be admitted that the voluntary absenteeism is in part a reflection on the Churches, perhaps more particularly on the local church congregations. Their frequent inability to achieve Christian community, to be the Church in the New Testament sense, and the ineffective witness of so many churchmen cannot be gainsaid.

Contradictions

At the same time the evidence from the Poll suggests that the prevailing apathy is supported by a good deal of popular self-deception. Although 85 per cent feel no need for active church membership, 82 per cent think that children should be baptized, 86 per cent that they should be taught to say their prayers, 92 per cent that they should go to Sunday School, while only one in sixteen wishes to see religious instruction and Scripture omitted from the school curriculum. Clearly parents wish their children to be brought up to know something of the Christian religion, but beyond taking them to Baptism are prepared to do little more about it themselves.

Again, in addition to the usual reasons advanced for lack of religious observance—the church services are dull and old-fashioned, etc.—it is objected that the Church's approach to current social and political problems is out of touch with popular opinion. This is no doubt true with regard to divorce—though less than 50 per cent think that the Church should re-marry all divorced persons. Yet 53 per cent object to the Church expressing any views on political questions at all. It is also an objection that the Church of England in particular has an upper-class bias, and that 'the clergy need to share the life of ordinary people, perhaps to be selected from them, in all respects to be without privilege or pretensions to

standards different from those of the congregations'. But it is a matter within the observation of anybody that for a generation now the clergy have been coming more and more from 'the people', and it is notorious that they have not the wherewithal to have any pretensions at all, when many working-class men have an income equal to or even higher than the incumbent of the vicarage or the manse.

The Exception

Mr. Gregory cites one exception to all this: the Roman Catholic Church. Here is a Church, he claims, which appeals to all classes, which has comparatively as many working-class members as well-to-do and middle-class, which is making more converts, and in which the proportion who attend its services are double those of the Free Churches and five times those of the Church of England. But—and here Mr. Gregory is silent—here is a Church which makes no concessions about divorce, or in revising its interpretation of the Bible and representing the basic Christian beliefs in a form credible to people to-day (a failing for which the non-Roman Churches are castigated), or for that matter in adapting and simplifying its services in form and language (an objection urged against the Church of England). The causes go deeper than these. Though in passing it may be questioned whether the Roman Church is the only one to be making converts. Speaking at Macclesfield on May 6th the Bishop of Chester, Dr. G. A. Ellison, said:

> 'The Roman Church publishes each year its statistics concerning conversions, and the impression is given that only the Roman communion is making headway. Hardly a week goes by in which I am not asked by a parish priest if he may receive sometimes an individual Roman Catholic, sometimes a family, into the Church of England.'
>
> His clergy had told him that in the past five years there were 38 known cases of members of the Church of England becoming Roman Catholics, and 251 known cases of Roman Catholics being received into the Church of England. 'Those figures indicate that the movement is not all in one direction.'

The *News Chronicle* survey, then, emphasizes the problem which faces the Churches not only in this country, but also in a traditionally Catholic country like France—though not apparently in America, which is enjoying an unprecedented boom in church membership. At the same time we wonder if the prospect is quite so desperate as it is made to seem. As Mr. Gregory admits in his concluding article:

> In the view of the early rationalists education would win the day for their philosophy. Things have not worked out that way—indeed, those who have the advantage of higher education are more willing to accept the idea of a God than those who left school at an early age. Atheism is not at present acceptable, neither to the older generation nor to the younger. Scientific humanism is not an acceptable substitute for Christianity, and shows no sign of becoming acceptable.

There is no doubt that over the last fifty years the trend has been away from the Churches. But there are some indications that the tendency is slowly beginning to be reversed as real and constructive attempts are being made to understand and solve the problems—by no means confined to religion—of industrial society.

Anglicans and the Kirk

The Joint Report on Closer Relations between the Presbyterian and Anglican Communions in England and Scotland arrived too late for comment. We intend, however, to give a full notice at a later date. This delay will not come amiss, as it has been commended for study both by the convocations of the Church of England and the assembly of the Scottish kirk.

DR. MAJOR AND THE *MODERN CHURCHMAN*

by The Archbishop of Canterbury

Dr. Major has just laid aside responsibility for editing the *Modern Churchman*, and the issue of January last marks the conclusion of his editorship. It is fitting that at this moment I should pay some tribute to a remarkable record: for he has been its editor for forty-six years. On and off all through that period I have been a reader of the *Modern Churchman*. Like many other, perhaps most, readers I have found myself sometimes in strong disagreement, often unconvinced, but always challenged and stimulated.

Titles are very difficult things. What this journal stood for was never 'Modern' in any exclusive sense, and, as I should judge, is now a good deal behind the modern climate of theological thinking. For that there is a reason. The journal was not so much 'modern' as devoted to the cause of liberal thought. But liberal thought always becomes to some measure illiberal when it tries to stand as a school of thought on its own. Liberal thought should properly be a powerful ingredient in every school of thought, but not a school of thought by itself: for then it runs the risk of adopting its own shibboleths and to be to some degree shackled by them.

Though I have never had the opportunity of close acquaintance with Dr. Major, I have from time to time had correspondence with him. I was often inclined to think that he was too firmly tied to certain unvarying modes of thought or expression in the realm of Christian doctrine to be in my sense of the word liberal. But he was always very learned, very lucid and very persistent, with a passion for truth as he saw it. In the years of his great leadership in this journal and at Ripon Hall, he rendered his service to the Church with great devotion and with a true humility of Christian discipleship. There were battles to be fought in those days, and he carried on his warfare of the spirit with great distinction. None of us are as free from our own faults of thought as we desire to be. Everyone who champions freedom in Christian thinking is serving the fellowship by compelling others to think more sincerely and soberly and to defend their own doctrinal loyalties by fresh springs of thought. The battle no longer rages over the same fields as in Dr. Major's younger days. But it is equally necessary that to-day in every part of the Church's endeavour thinking should not be content to invoke authority as its justification, but should lay itself open to follow in the spirit of freedom every guiding impulse of the Holy Spirit.

As I have said, the liberal judgment is neither ancient nor modern: it is in the true sense Catholic and should permeate all Christian thinking. While many features of modern life are very hostile to such judgment and do much injury to it, it would seem to me that in the Church of England the place of the liberal judgment in all schools of thought and in Christian discipleship itself is being increasingly recognized and welcomed. Dr. Major may not welcome all its manifestations. But it is true that in the immediate past by which the present has been largely fashioned, Dr. Major played a most conspicuous and gallant part, relentless in argument but resolute in sincerity and always devotedly reverent in spirit. He has helped his generation, if not to follow him in his thinking, yet to seek more eagerly, to think righteous judgments and to do truth.

THE REVISION OF THE CANON LAW

By Norman Sykes, F.B.A.

The history of post-Reformation Canon Law in the Church of England is avowedly complex and tortuous. By the Submission of the Clergy Act of 1534 a Commission of thirty-two persons, half being laymen and half of the clergy, was to be appointed to review and revise the existing Canon Law. This Commission was not appointed until the reign of Edward VI; nor was its Report ever made the subject of legislation. It was published by John Foxe with the authorization of Archbishop Matthew Parker in 1572 under the title of *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*. Thanks to the failure to implement its recommendations by statute, the position of the mediaeval Canon Law continued obscure; for it was declared by the Submission of the Clergy Act to continue in force except so far as contrarient to the royal prerogative, statute law and the custom of the realm. Meantime, during the long reign of Elizabeth I, a considerable number and variety of ecclesiastical injunctions and orders were issued; embracing, for example, the royal injunctions of 1559, Parker's Advertisements of 1566, the so-called 'canons' of 1571 and divers other rules; with the result that confusion became worse confounded. Accordingly James I issued in 1603 to the Convocation his royal licence to debate and frame Canons, and having given his royal assent to them when so framed, the Canons of 1604 became part of the law of the realm. Their enactment by the Crown in Convocation (if the paraphrase of the familiar 'Crown in Parliament' may be permitted) was strictly in accordance with the procedure envisaged in the preamble to the Act of Appeals of 1533, and was constitutionally correct. There was no constitutional ground for the intervention of Parliament in the making of Canons. Nevertheless, Sir Edward Coke in his Twelfth Report maintained the opinion (naturally supported by the Common Lawyers) that these Canons, though obligatory upon the clergy,

were not binding upon the laity, because the latter were not present by representation in the exclusively clerical Convocations. Moreover, the desuetude of the study of Canon Law in the universities as a result of the Tudor reformation led to an increase in the prestige of Civil Law, reinforced by the intrusion of civilian and lay lawyers into ecclesiastical causes. The results of these changes (results which were by no means uniformly fortunate) may be studied in the recently-published Lichfield lectures of Canon E. W. Kemp, *An Introduction to Canon Law in the Church of England*, a slender volume containing, however, much serviceable information. In order to clean up some of the confusion and complexity surrounding the present position of Canon Law in the Church of England, the two Archbishops in 1939 appointed a Commission, which reported in 1947; and upon the basis of whose Report, including a series of revised Canons, the present somewhat protracted process of revision is being undertaken by the Convocations.

Partly due to misunderstanding of the nature of this procedure and partly as a result of the above-mentioned complications in the post-Reformation history of the Canon Law, much concern is being expressed as to the nature and purport of the deliberations in Convocation. At the outset, one particular difficulty has arisen, relating to the position of the laity. According to the preamble to the Act of Appeals and following the precedent of the Canons of 1604, the laity have no constitutional right to be consulted in the framing of canons; but their exclusion is compensated (perhaps sufficiently and fortunately for them) by a corresponding exclusion from obligation to obey any such canons! But in the twentieth century it is evidently incongruous that the laity should have no means of knowing the progress of the revision of the Canons; and therefore the Archbishop of Canterbury has provided for extra-legal consultation by submitting the several Canons to the House of Laity of the Church Assembly, and inviting their comments. In so far therefore as the laity of the Church of England are represented by the House of Laity, their consultation (though not their formal concurrence) is ensured. Moreover, there is in session at present a Commission on Synodical Government, whose Report may be expected to deal with the position of the laity in respect of Canon Law as well as with other aspects of the problem of the participation of the laity in the official assemblies of the Church.

There is, of course, nothing sinister in the possession, or revision, of Canons by the Church of England. Other Provinces of the Anglican Communion (unfettered by the conditions of establishment prevailing in England) have their own codes of canons, including, for example, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, which is far from being clericalist either in temper or in constitution. Moreover, some of the proposed new canons are of the nature of bye-laws, and are as innocent of controversial content as the M.C.C. rule concerning a six-ball

over instead of an eight! There is nothing inherently strange or conspiratorial in the project of a revision of the Canons of 1604.

A further point must also be remembered. In accordance with the statutes of the Tudor reformation settlement, no Canon can be made which conflicts with an Act of Parliament; so that the supremacy of statute law is unchallenged. It is for this reason that a strategic retreat in regard to some of the proposed clauses of the Canons relating to Marriage has been counselled by the Archbishop of Canterbury. There can be no question of any Canon being passed which is contradictory to an act of parliament. Nor does the proposed requirement from the clergy of a promise to obey such present or future Canons as shall be enacted threaten an inquisitorial régime of oppression. For if and when any particular Canon or code of Canons receives the royal assent, it becomes thereby necessarily binding upon the clergy, whose consent is presumed to have been given by their representation through the clerical proctors in the Lower Houses of Convocation. It may well be indeed that particular Canons need careful criticism, scrutiny and examination before being presented to the Sovereign for signature; and this is the duty and province of the Convocations, aided by the informal representations of the House of Laity.

The urgent, practical question therefore for all churchmen, clerical and lay, is to ensure that proper critical examination is given to the projected Canons during their deliberation in the Convocations and through consultation with the House of Laity. Here lies the rub; for whilst the Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical schools of churchmanship are well represented in the Convocations, that of liberal churchmen is very sparsely represented; so that in consequence its standpoint is apt to go by default. The lack of such representation is recognized and deplored by the authorities of the Church; and it is of the utmost importance that steps should be taken to improve the position in this respect. For the normal methods of influencing ecclesiastical policy and opinion lie through participation in the deliberations of Convocation and the Church Assembly; and it is bad policy as well as unfortunate oversight if the voices of liberal churchmen are unheard in these representative bodies. If a majority of Church members, both clerical and lay as represented therein, is in favour of revision of the Canons of 1604, such revision will be carried; and in the case of Canons which do not touch nor are affected by statute law, there will be no need for an appeal to parliament. Some of their provisions will be found entirely innocuous, even beneficial; such, for example, as the clauses to remove the anomaly of the ridiculous decision of judicial tribunals of the last century that the use of wafer-bread in the Holy Communion is illegal (a manifest historical absurdity, as the reign of Elizabeth I proves); or the provisions for the allowance of diversity of vesture at the celebration of that Rite. Other Canons demand more careful

criticism; as, for example, the conversion of the Confirmation rubric into a legal requirement, which would have the effect of turning a rubric patient of a historical explanation and interpretation into an inflexible law of the Church. But the place for such critical scrutiny is in the constitutional assemblies of the Church and the means thereto the ensuring of a more adequate representation of the school of liberal churchmanship. If both clergy and laity of the Church of England have awoken somewhat tardily to the meaning and importance of the present revision of the Canons of 1604, the moral surely is that this awakening must be followed by action, before the Canons have passed through their final stages, preparatory to the taking of whatever steps may be necessary in each case for their enactment, either by the Royal Assent, or by Measure of the Church Assembly, or by a Parliamentary Bill. It is important that the Canon Law of the Church should be such as it needs, rather perhaps than such as it wants or even deserves. But the cry *Nolumus leges Angliae mutari* is as likely to be profitless in Church as in State; nor will anything serviceable be achieved by attempting to by-pass the Convocations and the Church Assembly in order to appeal, as in the Prayer Book revision of 1927-8, to that

> two-handed engine standing at the door,
> ready to smite once and smite no more.

THEOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE BAPTISM–CONFIRMATION CONTROVERSY

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The present controversy about the theological relation of Confirmation to Baptism involves not merely historical and liturgical questions about the practice of Christian initiation in the early Church, but also much more profound and far-reaching problems concerned with the fundamental doctrines of the Trinity, Grace and the Church.

The most recent important stage in this discussion was reached with the appearance of the Final Report of the Joint Commission of the Convocations, under the title, 'Baptism and Confirmation To-day', together with a Minority Report, 'Baptism, Confirmation and Communion'.

The Minority Report accepts and endorses the theory associated with the late Dom Gregory Dix and Dr. L. S. Thornton. This theory is conveniently summarized by the Bishop of Derby in his recent pamphlet, 'Current Problems of the Church'. He writes as follows: 'The late Dom Gregory Dix, in a lecture given at Oxford in 1946, reviving a thesis propounded fifty years earlier by the late Canon Mason of Canterbury (*The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, 1891), had argued (*a*) that the whole

complex of ceremonies described in the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus represented a type of Christian initiation going back earlier in date than the canonization of the writings of the New Testament, and so widespread as to have been at one time virtually universal in the Church;[1] (*b*) that the whole complex of ceremonies together formed what was originally a single rite, described usually as "Baptism", the word "Baptism" in the Fathers, and (as Dix and his school would maintain) in the New Testament, having normally an inclusive sense as denoting not what would in later days be called "Baptism", but the rite of Christian initiation as a whole; and (*c*) that baptism in water and baptism with the Spirit are to be sharply distinguished; that the former (a rite of cleansing, regeneration, and participation in the death and resurrection of Christ) is not to be regarded as the outward sign of the latter, but as a first stage only in the process of Christian initiation, the second stage (corresponding to what would now be called "Confirmation") having as its outward sign in the patristic period, and, as Dix would maintain, in the age of the New Testament, unction (a literal anointing with oil), and as its inner reality the gift of the Holy Spirit. Unction, performed by the Bishop, is to be equated, in Dix's view, with the "seal" of the Spirit: and baptism with water, even in the Name of Christ or of the Trinity, unless followed or completed by Confirmation, is regarded as being virtually of none effect. "It is," writes Dix, "the teaching of the New Testament that Baptism in the Spirit is *not* baptism in water, but something else which follows closely upon it," namely, the unction which conveys the seal of the Spirit. Support was given to Dom Gregory's thesis by Dr. L. S. Thornton, first in two pamphlets entitled respectively, "Confirmation To-day" and "The Unity of Baptism and Confirmation in Scripture", and later in a volume bearing the title, *Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery*, published in 1954. Dr. Thornton lays stress on the alleged links of Christian with Jewish ceremonies of initiation. A male proselyte to Judaism, he points out, was first circumcized and then baptized. "The Church," he writes, "retained baptism, but substituted for circumcision the rite of sealing, still so named in the East, but in Western nomenclature now called Confirmation." The Church eventually reversed the order of the rites, so that baptism came first. Since, moreover, in Dr. Thornton's view, the Christian neophyte baptized himself, but was confirmed by a minister, the minister of Confirmation becomes the all-important person, the spiritual father of the neophyte, and Confirmation is the more important part of the double rite. Immense stress is laid by Dr. Thornton on Confirmation, and on Confirmation at the hands of a bishop. "Unconfirmed Christians," he

[1]This complex consists primarily of pre-baptismal renunciation of the Devil, confession of faith, immersion in water, anointing with oil (apparently combined with an imposition of hands by the bishop), and the celebration of the Eucharist with the first Communion of the newly baptized.

believes, "have not yet entered into the full mercies of the covenant," and he describes the bishop as being "the indispensable organ through whom Jesus, the Messianic Head, maintains vital contact with the members of His body." In *Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery*, the same positions are maintained with greater elaboration and fullness. It is a characteristic of the biblical way of thinking (so Dr. Thornton maintains) to refer to a whole by one of its parts, and the term "Baptism" in the New Testament represents, he believes, a larger complex than baptism alone: it denotes baptism followed by the seal. Even in the New Testament period there was, according to Dr. Thornton, as a sequel to baptism, "a ceremony of anointing the head or the forehead, and marking the latter with the sign of the cross". Support is sought in what those who are not convinced by Dr. Thornton must needs regard as a quite fantastic type of argumentation based on mystical or typological exegesis of certain passages of the Old Testament.'

This summary of the position upheld by the Minority Report is a fair and, except in the last few words, objective statement of a theory which has commended itself to a not insignificant body of Anglican opinion, including a number of those who are associated with the Baptismal Reform Movement. Certain further considerations, however, ought perhaps to be added to what Dr. Rawlinson has here told us.

The argument which he describes turns, first, on the alleged fact that the pattern of Christian initiation shewn to us in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus already existed in the Apostolic Church itself; secondly, on the further supposition that this liturgical pattern was accompanied by a theology of initiation in which the positive emphasis was laid on the anointing of the candidate by the bishop, interpreted as the sacrament of the gift of the Spirit, for which water-baptism was a preparatory rite signifying, chiefly, cleansing from sin; thirdly, on the view that the disintegration of this ancient pattern of initiation in Western Christendom, and the separation of the bishop's anointing from baptism in water, led theologians to ask the question: 'What is the significance of the now detached rite of Confirmation'? (as the detached rite was coming, at least from the first council of Orange in 441, to be called).

The answer given to this question was, what Dix regarded as a quite improper one, that Confirmation is a sacramental rite in which there is conferred a strengthening with the Spirit, an *augmentum ad gratiam*, in which the Christian soldier is equipped with his weapons for the spiritual warfare, and special endowments of the Spirit are bestowed for active Christian service. To the question why, if this reply represents a perversion of primitive doctrine, it became the universal Western interpretation of Confirmation, affirmed in similar terms by both St. Thomas and Hooker and reproduced in all the standard Roman and Anglican textbooks of doctrine, Dix and his supporters have commonly replied by

pointing to the increased positive emphasis on baptism in water, brought about by the general adoption of infant baptism, the growing rarity of Confirmation (which was due to the growth of dioceses, combined with the insistence of Innocent I and Gregory the Great that Confirmation must be reserved for the bishop and not administered by presbyters), and the doctrinal and practical implications of the Augustinian theology of infant baptism. For these reasons, baptism in water, originally, according to Dix, little more than a preliminary lustration, came to be regarded as the positive sacrament of Christian initiation, conferring membership of the Church, incorporation into Christ and reception of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, the corresponding tendency to find a new meaning for the now detached rite of Confirmation by seeing in it a sacrament of growth, or the equipping of the Christian soldier, acquired a spurious but universal authority, according to Dix and Thornton, by its affirmation in the False Decretals.

The chief villain in the story of the perversion of the meaning, and the respective importance, of Baptism and Confirmation was, according to Dix, the preacher of the Homily on Pentecost attributed to a certain 'Eusebius' and assigned, probably rightly, by Morin to Faustus of Riez. Dix tells us, in his 1946 Oxford lecture, that much use was made of this sermon in the Decretals, which also incorporated with it an extract from Jerome's Dialogue against the followers of Lucifer of Cagliari, in which he disparaged episcopal Confirmation (*Lucif.* 7). This teaching thus came to be embodied in Gratian's *Decretum*, and so acquired an authority which actually enabled a false and misleading doctrine of Christian initiation to win general acceptance in the mediaeval West and to be uncritically taken over by the Reformers.

On this last point it is now sufficient to refer to the long appendix on 'The False Decretals and the Mediaeval Doctrine of Confirmation' in Fr. Bernard Leeming's book, *Principles of Sacramental Theology*. It is there shewn conclusively that the mediaeval theory is not to be accounted for on the lines propounded by Dix and Thornton. The mediaeval theologians did not rely on the Decretals in the way imagined by Dix. The Decretals did not cite the passage of Jerome which Dix thought they quoted. As Fr. Leeming puts it: 'One can only think that Dix wrote in a moment of forgetfulness; but this instance is . . . almost characteristic of his unreliability in dealing with the evidence about Confirmation both in the False Decretals and in the mediaeval theologians.' The mediaeval theory was not produced, as it were, out of a hat by the Western theologians of the fifth century. On the contrary, the main lines of Faustus' teaching had already been partially adumbrated by much earlier writers. Tertullian's statement that 'the body is signed that the soul may be *strengthened*', and the assertions of Cyril of Jerusalem and Narsai to the effect that we receive the armour of the Holy Spirit to enable us to with-

stand and conquer the enemy, already point to the typically mediaeval idea that Confirmation is a strengthening and an arming. We might perhaps add to these instances both the evidence of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, where consignation is described as a strengthening or 'confirmation', and also the wording of the bishop's prayer in the *Apostolic Tradition* itself, in which prayer is made that through the bishop's unction the candidates may receive grace to serve God faithfully. Grace for active service is a primary meaning of the rite of Confirmation in mediaeval and Reformed teaching.

What Dix supposed to be a new and perverted doctrine, making its first appearance in the fifth-century West and written into mediaeval theology through the influence of the Decretals, is in fact present from early times as one strand in the complex texture of thought on this subject. 'The conviction that the Holy Ghost through the seal protects and fortifies the confirmed,' says Fr. Leeming, 'is common among the Fathers, perhaps even more in the East than in the West. The False Decretals did no more than sum up the accepted teaching and give it greater authority by attributing it to the Popes.' His conclusion is: 'The theory of the influence of the False Decretals in depreciating Confirmation is based rather upon the supreme rhetorical skill of the late Dom Gregory Dix than upon an impartial assessment of the facts.'

The matter does not, however, end here. Dix's rhetorical skill has persuaded many Anglicans that their traditional doctrine of Confirmation rests upon no better foundation than the muddled notions of fifth-century Gallic preachers, bolstered up with the sham authority of the False Decretals. Among their number stand the writers of the Minority Report, who have uncritically swallowed everything that Dix said about the origins of the mediaeval doctrine of Confirmation. 'There were some at least,' write Dr. Jalland and his colleagues, 'who, in answer to the question why, in addition to baptism, confirmation was required, took refuge in the reply that confirmation supplied further gifts, or else that it imparted a certain *robur ad pugnam*. In this way the classic doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas was evolved, and found its justification by reference to the False Decretals. What is serious from the point of view of the Churches of the Reformation is that it was on this doctrine that their future founders and leaders were nurtured.'

There is no need, let us repeat, for us to be embarrassed by these allegations that our traditional theory of Confirmation lacks a respectable theological parentage. We may well go much further and maintain that it provides a sound rationale of the rite and its relation to Baptism, grounded in much early patristic teaching and consonant with, though not, as I should hold, necessitated by, Holy Scripture. We shall do well to adhere to it unless we are persuaded that the interpretation given by

Dix and his school to the teaching of the New Testament and the early Church is more reliable than their treatment of the Middle Ages.

Let us first remind ourselves what that interpretation involves. It asserts that Christian initiation has properly consisted from the earliest times in a double rite in which water-baptism signifies remission of sins, and, on the evidence of Tit. iii, 5, regeneration, while the imposition of hands, and/or unction and consignation, confers 'renewing of the Holy Ghost', that is, the gift of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. As Dr. Thornton expressed it in *Confirmation To-day*: 'First comes baptism for the remission of sins; then the promised circumcision of the heart in the seal of confirmation. When these two stages are completed, then, and not till then, the indwelling of the Spirit takes place.' In his more recent book, *Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery*, Dr. Thornton seems to have modified the force of his 'then and not till then'. In his earlier pamphlet, however, he was prepared to draw the rigorous conclusion: 'Unconfirmed Christians . . . have not yet entered into the full mercies of the covenant; for they have not yet received that "first instalment" of the indwelling Spirit which prepares us for the day of our final redemption.' This is, by implication, the theory endorsed by the Minority Report.

This view, that the unconfirmed Christian is not a Christian in any proper sense of the term (for the *arrhabon* of the Spirit is the distinctive mark of the Christian), obviously involves a total revision of our doctrine of the Church; for it is normally held that the validly baptized are all, in some sense, members of Christ's Church, whether or not they have been confirmed. All talk about reunion, so far as non-episcopal Churches are concerned, begins with this assumption. If the Dix–Thornton school were right, this assumption would be overthrown. Indeed, there can be little doubt that this school's theory owes something of its attractiveness to the very fact that its acceptance by the Church of England as a whole would bring all thoughts of reunion, except in the sense of absorption into the Anglican Church, to a decisive full stop. In this respect the Dix–Thornton doctrine closely resembles the very similar theory advocated by Henry Dodwell in his *Epistolary Discourse* to a Scottish Episcopalion in 1706, on the eve of the union of the two countries. On the other hand, those who oppose the Dix–Thornton theory do not do so simply because they see in it an inconvenient obstacle to schemes of reunion. Their objections are very serious, and they may be summarized under three heads.

The first is of relatively minor importance. The theory runs counter to the main tradition of Anglican doctrine. It stands in direct opposition to what is said about Baptism and Confirmation in the Prayer Book and the Articles. That the theory in which the positive sacrament of initiation is identified with Confirmation, while Baptism becomes a negative rite

of cleansing, contradicts the Anglican formularies is obvious and needs no argument. It is also contrary to the unanimous voice (apart from the eccentric ideas of Dodwell) of the doctors of our Church until the end of the nineteenth century. Then, it is true, we find Fr. Puller and Dr. Mason asserting the primacy of Confirmation over Baptism on the ground that in the Apostolic Church, as Acts 8, 9 and 19 testify, initiation regularly took place in two stages of which the second, the laying-on of hands, was associated with the positive gift of the Spirit. In water-baptism, they held, the Holy Spirit operated *ab extra* in regenerating the believers, but his indwelling presence was reserved for the second stage. This theory soon receded into the background of Anglican thought, largely owing to the powerful refutation of Puller and Mason by those learned champions of the traditional doctrine, Dr. William Bright and Dr. Darwell Stone. Its resurgence in the work of Dix and Thornton was made possible by the identification of the *Apostolic Tradition*. On the assumption that this treatise described practices of great antiquity, which might even be read with some plausibility out of the New Testament itself, it became possible to assert with Dodwell that the essential positive element in Christian initiation was an unction signifying the gift of the Spirit, and that Baptism in the ordinary sense of the term was, in Dodwell's words, 'purgative or cathartick' only.

We may notice in passing that Mason and Dix held opposite views about the laying-on of hands in the apostolic Church. For Mason the episode at Samaria is primary evidence for the positive importance of the sacrament of Confirmation. Dix, on the other hand, thought it had nothing to do with Confirmation, and that what happened when St. Peter and St. John visited Samaria was an ordination of prophets. This discrepancy is not always noticed by supporters of the Dix–Thornton position. Thus the Minority Report makes the best of both worlds. It endorses Dix's claim to have discovered in the New Testament a pattern of initiation in which the positive weight falls upon an anointing after Baptism (originally, before Baptism); at the same time it insists, like Mason, on the evidence of Acts 8 and 19 for the practice of Confirmation in the apostolic Church and its interpretation as the sign of the gift of the Spirit.

However this may be, it remains true that the theories of Puller, Mason, Dix and Thornton, endorsed by the Minority Report, propose that the Church of England should deny its traditional teaching about initiation. Those who support them are are not, as they seem so strangely at times to suppose, defenders of Catholic orthodoxy. In reality they are innovators of a very radical kind.

This is not to suggest that the Prayer Book and Articles are infallible. They are always subject to revision by the criterion of Scripture as interpreted by tradition; and if it can be shewn that Scripture compels us to tear up our formularies, then we must do so. Nevertheless, the onus of

proving this to be the case lies with the innovators. They must shew decisively that our tradition is wrong before we will allow them to re-write our Church's constant teaching.

The most important objection to their theory is its doctrinal unsoundness. The theology of Dix and Thornton is committed to the wholly impossible assertion that by water-baptism we are cleansed from sin and regenerated, but that it is only through Confirmation that we receive the indwelling of the Spirit. This is impossible because regeneration and remission of sins are simply aspects, inseparable from all the other aspects, of what St. Paul calls the state of being 'in Christ'. Our possession of the indwelling Spirit, again, is simply another aspect of the same condition of being 'in Christ'. To be in Christ and to be in the Spirit are different modes of one and the same reality. Regeneration and sonship towards God in Christ are not to be distinguished, except in thought, from reception of the Spirit.

Puller and Mason did indeed try to distinguish the external operation of the Spirit, in regenerating the believer in Baptism, from His indwelling presence which is mediated in Confirmation; and one or two Roman Catholic theologians, such as Karl Adam, have similarly sought to differentiate between a 'dynamic' presence of the Spirit, given in Baptism, and a 'substantial' presence which is reserved for Confirmation. Such distinctions, however, are wholly unreal. Remission of sins is simply one aspect of incorporation into Christ, and incorporation into Christ involves the indwelling of the Spirit. This is what Fr. Leeming implies when he says: 'There is no intermediary state between the state of sin and the state of being in Christ and in His Spirit. In baptism the Christian dies to sin that he may live the new life with Christ . . . Now the life unto God in Christ is a life not merely caused by the Spirit, but a life with the Spirit dwelling in the soul . . . It is theologically certain . . . that sanctifying grace involves the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.'

Thus the attempt made by Puller and Mason, and sometimes repeated by modern theologians, to postulate a dichotomy in the modes of the Spirit's operation in respect of regeneration and indwelling is wholly misconceived. Worse still is the idea that one can become a member of Christ and yet still remain without the indwelling presence of the Spirit. This false notion is explicitly formulated in a pamphlet, *One Baptism*, by F. H. Elpis, published in 1946 by the Baptismal Reform Movement. 'Christ,' says this author, 'is the Redeemer of our human nature, and His method of redemption was to take our nature and to impart His to us; because of being baptized we are partakers of the divine nature. The initial stage of this process whereby we first receive the life of Christ is of eternal import, and we may never belittle it. But as we are united to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, who told His Church to look forward to the coming of the Paraclete, so we need also that second act or stage,

commonly called Confirmation, that we may be filled with the indwelling Spirit.'

The theological errors of this passage are obvious enough. Its author has failed to observe that the Church was not told to await the coming of the Paraclete after being already united with the Second Person of the Trinity. On the contrary, the disciples were given the promise of the coming of the Paraclete to be the mediator to them of the life in Christ, and mediate the glorified Christ to them. *One Baptism* has tried to apply to the *ascended* Christ and His relation to the sending of the Spirit what was true only of the *incarnate* Christ and His relation to the sending of the Spirit; and this is theologically impossible.

Besides misunderstanding one of the basic themes of the Fourth Gospel, this author has been gravely misled by his tritheistic conception of the operation of the Divine Persons. The idea that we can have the Son and yet be without the Holy Spirit is a fundamental Trinitarian error. It is repeated by Henry Cooper in a letter on Baptism in the *Church Quarterly Review* of January 1955: 'I cannot agree that being incorporated into the body of Christ automatically bestows the gift of the Spirit, for that seems to confuse the Second and Third Persons.' The same tendency towards a tritheistic interpretation of the work of the Spirit in relation to the believer's incorporation into Christ runs through Dr. Thornton's argument in *Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery*. 'As the Spirit in the Church is complementary to the Christ,' he writes, 'so is Confirmation the complement of Baptism.' Mr. J. C. Sladden effectively points out the error in his review of Dr. Thornton's book in *Theology*, February 1955: 'The Spirit is not merely complementary to the Christ. He is the bearer of the Christ to the Church, as He is conversely of the Bride to the Lamb. In whatever sense, degree or measure the Spirit does not dwell in us, in the same sense, degree and measure the Christ also does not dwell in us, nor we in Him.'

Whatever may be the liturgical history of initiation in the primitive Church, this fundamental theological truth remains. There is ample scope for a 'high' doctrine of Confirmation as a true confirmation to the believer of the gifts of Baptism, and as a means of fresh approaches of the Holy Spirit to the soul for new purposes; but the initial bestowal of the Spirit's indwelling, by which a man becomes a Christian, cannot be sacramentally mediated otherwise than by the sacrament which makes him a member of Christ and sets him in the Body of Christ. The argument against the Dix–Thornton school and the Minority Report is not concerned only or primarily with liturgical history nor with the early patristic interpretations of the rite of initiation. It is a controversy about a fundamental question of Trinitarian orthodoxy. It raises the question whether we are to preserve the wholeness of the New Testament's Christocentric doctrine of initiation, or whether we are to divide the Godhead

in respect of the believer's sonship to the Father through the Son in the Spirit, and so, like the second-century Gnostics, distinguish between ordinary baptism in which we are purified, and a higher Spirit-baptism in which we are made partakers of the Spirit. The objection to the Dix–Thornton theory, which is upheld by Dr. Jalland and his colleagues, is that it denies that the Spirit is given in the sacrament which is admitted to be the sign of incorporation into Christ, and such a denial is unscriptural, contrary to tradition and incompatible with sound reason.

The arguments against this theory are briefly set out by Fr. Leeming: '(1) Not to have the indwelling of the Spirit means not to belong to Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his". Now the baptized certainly belong to Christ, by the fact of baptism; and the conclusion cannot be avoided that the baptized also possess the indwelling Spirit. (2) Those who are justified are made sons of God; and sonship connotes the indwelling Spirit of sonship within us. "You have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father". "For the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God". "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father".'

It should be observed in passing that this last text (Gal. iv, 6), which Leeming rightly adduces in conjunction with Rom. viii, 16, to prove that sonship and Spirit-possession are inseparable, was actually taken by Thornton in *Confirmation: Its Place in the Baptismal Mystery* as evidence of a dichotomy between them, corresponding to a division of Christian initiation into the two stages of Baptism and Confirmation. Misled, perhaps, by the English version of ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, he assumed that St. Paul meant to tell the Galatians that *because* they were already sons of God (through Baptism), God had now sent the Spirit into their hearts (in the second stage of initiation). At first sight this text is Thornton's strongest scriptural proof. It is practically the only text whose literal sense is allowed to stand in his book without the assistance of allegorical or typological readjustment. In fact, however, the conjunction ὅτι is here demonstrative, not causal. Knox's version gives the right meaning: '*To prove that* you are sons, God has sent the Spirit . . . ' Thornton's exegesis runs counter to that of all the ancient, and almost all the modern, commentators, and if there were still any doubt that it is untenable, both on linguistic and on theological grounds, this has been removed by the detailed study of this text by Dr. S. Zedda, published in 1952.[2]

Fr. Leeming's conclusion from this and allied texts is that sonship and the Spirit of sonship must be inseparable; sonship comes by baptism, and again the conclusion is inevitable that the baptized have the indwelling Spirit. 'Consequently, there seems to be nothing less than contradiction involved in this distinction between the action of the Holy Ghost upon the

[2] *L'adozione a figli di Dio e lo Spirito Santo* (Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Rome).

soul in Baptism, and the personal indwelling in Confirmation. How can we be in Christ, yet not in His Spirit? How can we belong to Christ, yet not have the Spirit by whom, precisely, we are made to belong to Him? How can we be sons of God, yet not have the Spirit of sonship, and be temples of God, and yet not have the indwelling of God's Spirit? . . . Scripture knows no man whose sins have been forgiven, who has been reborn, who yet has not the divine life of God's Spirit within him.' This is, surely, the final answer to Dr. Thornton's, 'When these two stages are completed, then and not till then the indwelling of the Spirit takes place.' The Dix–Thornton theory may seem attractive at first sight as a short cut to the solution of pastoral difficulties concerning infant Baptism in the semi-pagan world of to-day, but it is theologically so wrong that it can hardly be expected to prove to be more than a temporary aberration in the tradition of Anglican baptismal doctrine. It would be very regrettable if the Baptismal Reform Movement were to be led, through an uncritical acceptance of the Minority Report, to adopt the false theology which it implicitly endorses when it pleads for the reinstatement of the hypotheses associated with Mason, Dix and Thornton.

It may, of course, be argued that although the Pauline teaching links Spirit-possession with sonship and sees both as inseparable aspects of the grace-faith union with Christ which is symbolically effected in the 'burial with him by baptism', Acts 8, 9 and 19, together with Heb. vi, 2, distinguish between Baptism into Christ, on the one hand, and the reception of the Spirit through the imposition of hands, on the other. It is unnecessary, however, to recapitulate the arguments of Dr. Wirgman and Dr. Darwell Stone[3] in their refutation of Dr. Mason's theory of Confirmation, which rested upon that view. Even on the evidence of Acts alone, it is impossible to suppose that what happened in Samaria, or indeed at Ephesus, was typical of the regular practice of Christian initiation in the apostolic age. Whatever the explanation of these episodes may be, they are certainly exceptional, and are recorded, not as samples of the normal mode of admission into the Church, but as remarkable and extraordinary events at turning-points in the Church's missionary progress. Heb. vi, 2, may, indeed, indicate that in some parts, at least, of the primitive Church an imposition of hands was regularly associated with Baptism. We are not told its meaning, but the analogy of the other uses of this rite suggests that it denoted the identification of the newly-baptized with the existing members of the Church and so with the Spirit-possessed Body of Christ. If so, the rite explicates one aspect of the believers' baptismal union with Christ. The teaching of the New Testament as a whole forbids us to find here a theological dichotomy between a water-baptism and a separate

[3]A. T. Wirgman, *The Doctrine of Confirmation*, 1897; D. Stone, 'The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism' (*Church Quarterly Review*, 45, 1898); cf. my survey of these passages in *The Seal of the Spirit* (1951), chapter 5.

'baptism with the Spirit'; nor can it be found in any of the other texts that are sometimes quoted in this sense, such as Titus iii, 5.

Although it would be unsafe to argue from the silence of all writers of the sub-apostolic age that they knew of no 'Spirit-baptism' distinct (except as inward reality from outward sign) from water-baptism, Justin says much about Baptism, and his silence is therefore significant. Dr. Thornton maintains, it is true, that 'in *Dial.* xxix, 1, Justin repudiates the two Jewish rites of initiation, placing them in their Jewish order: (*a*) circumcision, (*b*) baptism. In xliii, 2-3, he says that we received "a spiritual circumcision through baptism", and his use of Joshua's story (Josh. v, 2-12) makes the meaning clear. We pass through the waters of Jordan with Jesus to receive the seal of circumcision on the farther side. Thus the typology fits a reversal of the Jewish order. For now Confirmation follows Baptism.'[4] Justin, however, repudiates circumcision and Jewish baptism, not so as to replace them by Christian Baptism and Confirmation, but to assert the superiority over both Jewish rites of Christian water-baptism. The Joshua story is introduced by Justin in a context which has no bearing on the manner of Christian initiation.[5] Justin's account of Baptism in *Dial.* xliii, 2-3, has nothing at all to do with the Joshua story; it contrasts Christian water-baptism with the fleshly circumcision of Abraham.

The whole attempt to show that in the early Church Confirmation was regarded as the Christian counterpart to circumcision, and that Justin is a witness to this, is altogether baseless. To quote Fr. Leeming again: 'The conclusion is absolute that it is Baptism and not Confirmation which is the spiritual circumcision of Christians . . . St. Justin unquestionably regards Baptism as a spiritual circumcision because it removes sin; and as in the case of St. Paul, no ingenuity can darken counsel about this radical fact.' Nevertheless, we still read in the Minority Report that 'Justin's use of his appeal to the precedents and typology of the Old Testament makes it reasonably certain that a rite analogous to Confirmation was in his mind.'

The Report may be thinking, not only of Justin's alleged typology of circumcision, but also of the suggestion made by Fr. Couratin that Justin's use of the leper's meal-offering as a eucharistic type may be due to the fact that it appears in a context which also mentions washing and anointing; so that he may have had the whole initiatory sequence in mind as he worked out his typology. This in an ingenious theory; but it is at least equally possible that Justin was hard put to it to discover types of the eucharistic offering in the Levitical system, and that the offering of fine flour suggested itself as a suitable parallel in its own right, without reference to its context. It would be hazardous to infer from this alone that

[4] *C.R.* 198, p. 7. [5] *Dial.* 24.

Justin knew the developed rite of initiation as it existed at the close of the century, and quite unwarrantable to regard it as proof that Justin anticipated the Gnostics in distinguishing Spirit-baptism, as a rite, from water-baptism.

It is possible that Theophilus of Antioch (i, 12), in his play on the meaning of 'Christians' as denoting those who are anointed with the oil of God, may be thinking of an actual unction, and it is conceivable that the New Testament passages which speak of the anointing of believers may be intended literally, though they are much more probably meant metaphorically, on the analogy of Isaiah lxi, 1. Dr. F. L. Cross's interpretation of I Peter as a paschal liturgy would indeed bring the main lines of Hippolytus's initiatory rite into the New Testament period, though it is worth notice that I Peter is silent about anything corresponding to the 'Confirmation' part of Hippolytus's baptismal service. This whole interpretation, however, has been weightily criticized by Professor Moule.[6]

On balance, it would seem probable that the Hippolytean pattern of initiation is not to be discovered in the New Testament or in the second-century authors before the time of Tertullian (or just possibly Irenaeus); but however obscure the liturgical question may remain, there is no theological duality in the New Testament or sub-apostolic doctrine of Baptism.

After the second century there is a good deal of confusion in patristic thought about the relation of the gift of the Spirit to Baptism. The Christocentric wholeness of Baptism to some extent breaks down. What are really inseparable aspects of the one reality are parcelled off, as it were, and provided with their own subsidiary ceremonies; and that aspect which is the reception of the Spirit tends to be associated particularly with the post-baptismal chrismation or, especially in the West, with the imposition of hands, for which the scriptural proof was found in Acts. It is not (*pace* Fr. Leeming) to disparage the Fathers to think that they failed to maintain the fullness of the New Testament teaching, and that from the third to the fifth or sixth centuries there is a good deal of confusion in baptismal theology. As long as the single complex rite of initiation remained, the problems which the Fathers were trying to answer were very different from our own.

Finally, the pattern of the traditional Western doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation begins to emerge clearly. It does not have any exact parallel in the primitive Church. It is a legitimate development, worked out to meet a changed pastoral situation. In so far as Confirmation provides, as it so emphatically does in the Anglican tradition, for the affirmation of personal faith by a person baptized in infancy, it is a necessary completion of infant Baptism, without which the practice of the latter is hard to justify. Such an affirmation involves a corresponding ratification of God's covenant promises; and this involves fresh spiritual gifts, a new

[6] *New Testament Studies*, November 1956.

approach of the Holy Spirit to the baptized Christian in fresh aspects and for new purposes. It is appropriate that the sign accompanying prayer for this activity of the Spirit should be the imposition of the bishop's hands. This signifies the commissioning and blessing of the Christian at the hands of the local head of the community of which he is now himself a fully responsible and active member.

Episcopal Confirmation in this sense is a vitally important part of our inheritance; but to suggest that without it no one can be a participant in Christ's Spirit, and a genuine member of His Church, is theologically and empirically absurd.

(Note.—This article was delivered as a Sion College Lecture in Advent, 1956.)

THE TEACHING OF JESUS ON DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

By the Rev. L. B. Cross, M.A., Sometime Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford

Much confusion has been caused in connection with Jesus' teaching on divorce and remarriage by the fact that the relevant texts in the gospels on the subject, those of Matthew and Mark,[1] would appear to be at variance with each other. The Markan narrative, if taken at its face value, affirms that Jesus was averse both to divorce and to remarriage on any grounds. Matthew, on the other hand, represents him as allowing remarriage, and presumably as recognizing the right to dissolve marriage, in cases of unchastity. It would appear, however, from a close and comparative study of these two texts that this contradiction is superficial, and that the Matthean, rather than the Markan text, correctly represents the dialogue which took place between Jesus and the Pharisees. The author of Matthew, far from changing the essential meaning of his Markan source, amplified and clarified it, probably at a time when the theological and social background of the discussion could no longer be assumed as well known to his readers.

The Judaism of our Lord's day held marriage and family life in high esteem. Contrary to what is sometimes supposed, its leaders strongly deprecated divorce, especially among the younger generations. They were realist enough, however, to admit that, if the ideals of marriage and of family life had been shattered, it seemed to be in the best interests of morality and social order to accept this, and encourage a new start in lawful wedlock. Where circumstances demanded, divorce was therefore freely permitted, though subject to many restrictions and regulations. As is well known, these circumstances, restrictions and regulations were subject to endless controversy between the rival Rabbinic schools, especially

[1]Mt. xix, 3–12; Mk. x, 2–12.

between those of Hillel and Shammai. It is this controversy which is reflected in the dialogue on divorce and remarriage in the gospels.

Of very great importance in this controversy was Deuteronomy xxiv, 1-2, the only passage in the Old Testament in which any legal direction is given as to grounds of divorce, its procedure, and remarriage. The passage runs as follows: 'When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.'

Unfortunately, maybe deliberately, the grounds on which divorce might be obtained are vague: their interpretation bedevilled their application. The rigorist Shammai, concentrating on the words 'some unseemly thing', literally 'the nakedness of a thing', and manipulating the text, interpreted them as referring to adultery. He recognized the possibility of dissolving a marriage on those grounds only. Hillel's interpretation was more liberal; he read into the whole passage the maximum of reasons for divorce consistent with social order. There can be no doubt whatsoever that, according to the original context of this law, Shammai's interpretation was wrong. In the selfsame corpus of law,[2] and in Leviticus,[3] adultery is punishable by death. No legislation would provide for the divorce with a view to remarriage of a woman who, having committed adultery, was by that same law condemned to death. Adultery automatically severed the marriage bond.

It is doubtful if the death penalty in cases of adultery and other specified forms of unchastity was applied, at any rate, as late as our Lord's time, though the account of the woman taken 'in the very act' in John, is significant. For the death penalty to be applied, the evidence of two witnesses that the parties concerned had been taken 'in the very act' was required. It is, however, certain that adultery was still considered as automatically dissolving a marriage. Indeed, the Judaism of New Testament times went further, it demanded that a man whose wife had been unfaithful should put her away. This was the dilemma forced upon Joseph when he found Mary to be 'with child', but, 'being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.'[4]

That it was precisely against this background, and with Deuteronomy xxiv, 1-2, in mind that Jesus and the Pharisees were discussing divorce is evidenced by the fact that in both Matthew and Mark this Mosaic law is referred to. In answer to Jesus' question, 'What did Moses command you? the reply was given, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.' Further, in Matthew the question asked by the Pharisees raised the whole problem of divorce in the exact form in which

[2]Deut. xxii, 22 f. [3]Lev. xx, 10 f. [4]Mt. i, 18 f.

it was discussed by the Rabbis on the basis of Deuteronomy, 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife *for every cause*?' Again, the dialogue concludes, as does the relevant passage in Deuteronomy, with the question of remarriage. The Markan form of the question asked by the Pharisees is hardly likely to have been put, 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?' as the Mosaic law unquestionably assumed the legality of divorce. The reply of Jesus to this question in Mark, 'What did Moses command you?' confirms the correctness of the Matthean form, namely, that the point at issue was the grounds on which divorce was to be permitted—'for every cause?'—not its legality.

As the discussion was clearly on the basis of Deuteronomy xxiv, 1-2, and therefore on grounds of divorce, and since adultery and kindred forms of unchastity were held automatically to dissolve marriage, it must surely follow that such cases would not have been taken into account either by the Pharisees or by Jesus. They were *ultra vires* as far as the law on divorce was concerned. It is as a reminder of this fact that Matthew, parenthetically, almost casually, mentions that cases of unchastity—'except for fornication'—do not apply to Jesus' pronouncement on remarriage, or, presumably, to what he said about divorce. It was because Mark had left this matter of common knowledge to the intelligence and imagination of his readers that Matthew found it necessary, at a later date and in different circumstances, to make the position quite clear.

Confirmation of this Matthean reminder that Jesus accepted unfaithfulness as automatically dissolving marriage, leaving the innocent party free to remarry as though the former husband or wife had died, is to be found in Jesus' teaching on divorce. This teaching is substantially the same in Matthew and Mark. In reply to the Pharisees' statement that Moses commanded to give a bill of divorcement and to put the wife away, Jesus answered, 'Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so.' Jesus neither abrogated the Mosaic law referred to, nor did he challenge its wisdom. He exposed its true worth. It was a concession to human frailty, albeit a divine concession, for to him, as to his questioners, the law had divine authority, permanence and perfection. Such lower standards, however, though allowed in the law, were not his standards, nor were they the true standards of God. He went behind the Mosaic law, and made a positive appeal for higher ideals of married life on theological and biological grounds. Divorce on any and every ground was contrary to God's original intentions for man. 'Have ye not read, that he which made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall become one flesh? So that they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.'

This biological view of marriage with its strong sex associations, and

based on Genesis,[5] is emphasized by both Matthew and Mark to the point of over-emphasis; ' so that they are no more twain but one flesh'. Despite the divine concession in the Mosaic law, divorce was contrary to God's will and to his creative act. It was contrary because it destroyed the 'one flesh', thus severing the union which God had made. Divorce is condemned solely on this ground. Thus, if it was the preservation of the 'one flesh' which was the essential condition in marriage, then Jesus could not have meant these words to apply to adultery which, by its very nature, violated 'the one flesh' principle. The logic of his argument demands that he accepted the attitude of the Old Testament, and that of his contemporaries, to all forms of unchastity within the married state, that they automatically dissolved the marriage bond. What the author of Matthew makes explicit in relation to Jesus' teaching on remarriage, both he and Mark leave implicit in relation to divorce.

Following the condemnation of divorce 'for every cause', namely, other than unchastity, the narratives proceed with the pronouncement by Jesus on remarriage; in Matthew still in discussion with the Pharisees, in Mark privately with the disciples. This change of subject from divorce to remarriage continues, as has been noticed, to follow the Deuteronomic passage with which the discussion began. There the divorced wife is free to remarry, as, presumably, is the husband also. Jesus denies this right as categorically as he had denied the right to divorce. In remarrying, both first and second husbands of the divorced wife are guilty of adultery. This was the logical outcome of his doctrine of the 'one flesh'. To be joined to another partner vitiated that principle; it also automatically precluded even the possibility of marriage in the true sense in such cases. The reminder by the author of Matthew at this juncture that these strictures on remarriage did not apply to the innocent party where a marriage had been nullified by unchastity is apposite. The guilty party, if not actually put to death, was socially, morally and spiritually in the category of the dead. There being no question of divorce in such cases, there could be no restriction on remarriage.

Small wonder that the disciples said privately to Jesus, 'If the case with the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry.' What had frightened them to such a degree? Surely the thought that only by adultery could the marriage bond be severed; only to live in perpetual adultery could those who broke the rule of no divorce remarry. The odour of death haunted marriage. Jesus' reply brought little comfort: 'All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men; and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.' Here the reference must be to his

[5]Gen ii, 24.

teaching on divorce and remarriage, in particular to the biological reasons which he had given against divorce. The allusion to eunuchs would be out of place in relation to the disciples' protest. Jesus' teaching was a counsel of perfection which all men could not receive. Not to marry for fear of the consequences was a denial of a divine dispensation for man, a shirking of the issues involved in marriage, a second best. Only eunuchs, whether by birth, by castration, or for the kingdom of heaven's sake could refrain from marriage with any justification, for by physical means they avoided the spiritual perils of the 'one flesh' principle. It was, as Jesus had just said, because of 'your hardness of heart' that all men could not accept this teaching.

If we accept, as it seems we must accept, that the dialogue between Jesus and the Pharisees was conducted exclusive of cases of adultery, then the Matthean narrative is not only consistent within itself, it is also consistent with that given in Mark, the logical conclusions of which it draws out. Jesus accepted adultery and kindred forms of unchastity as the only grounds on which a man could put away his wife and remarry. Divorce, as such, he refused to countenance on any grounds, and remarriage, excepting in cases of adultery, involved the new partners to a marriage in that very evil. That a concession had been made in the Mosaic law he recognized, but the original divine intention still stood, and took precedence over it. Only eunuchs, by emulating the state of man before woman was made, were justified in avoiding marriage.

THE BIBLE AND OTHER RELIGIONS

By John Drewett

The attitude of the Church to the other religions of the world has varied considerably from time to time. Sometimes Christianity has tried to destroy other religions by force of arms or by persecution, as was the case with the Jews and the Muslims. Sometimes, methods closely allied to syncretism have been used, as was the case with the evangelization of the Slavs or, in more recent times, with the Jesuits in South India. In our own time, new conditions have arisen which have had their effect upon this problem. The nineteenth-century spirit of progress and optimism, which inevitably invaded the studies of the theologians and missionary statesmen, tended to the view that the other religions of the world, being inferior to Christianity and belonging to cultures which were considered backward from a Western viewpoint, would give way before the onward march of Christendom. This being so, it was hardly more than a waste of time to take them seriously.

But this has obviously not happened. As a matter of fact, the spread of Christianity and, with it, Western culture, has led to an astonishing revival of the other religions and a refusal on the part of millions of their

adherents to accept the religion of the Western world. In the face of the unexpected revival of religions which were thought to have lost their vitality, two attitudes have developed in recent years. The first, which we might associate with Professor Hocking and the Jerusalem Missionary Conference of 1928, may be described as an attempt to find all that is common ground between the great religions of the world, including Christianity, and to co-operate as far as possible with those of other faiths. This is still the line taken by many American theologians, by many Christian laymen and by Western governments who have territories in Africa and Asia. This tolerant attitude springs from two roots. The first is a deep conviction on the part of many that there is something indecent in interfering with another person's religious beliefs, and the second is a feeling, in the face of growing materialism all over the world, that those who hold a religious interpretation of the universe should unite as far as possible to uphold spiritual values. Perhaps there is one other factor which should be mentioned. Many Western Christians, feeling an increasing sense of disillusionment with the Christian Church's failure to create a just and peaceable society, are beginning to wonder whether the other religions of the world have a contribution to make which Christianity cannot supply; whether, in short, the future of religion itself does not depend upon a new synthesis of the great historic faiths.

The second attitude which has developed has been a reaction against the 'liberal' tendency of the years preceding the Jerusalem Conference and can be best illustrated from the book which Dr. Kraemer wrote for the Tambaram Conference of 1938 (*The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*). This book is written from a thorough-going Barthian position which the writer himself has since somewhat modified. Nevertheless, this uncompromising attitude to the other religions of the world is still widespread and is, perhaps, the main driving force of the modern missionary movement. In its most extreme form, as presented by Dr. Kraemer's book, it would maintain that all other religions are forms of humanism in the sense that they have their origin, not in revelation, but in man's effort to create his own gods. They start from the manward side and have, therefore, nothing in common with a revelation which is given by God as is the case with Judaism and Christianity. From this point of view, as saving faith or redemptive power, they are for this reason useless.

The difficulty about this view is that it does not square with the facts. The great religions of the East do, as a matter of fact, produce in certain people a high degree of sanctity and a spirit of unselfish service which cannot be gainsaid. Here is a quotation from a recent article by an experienced missionary: 'The real strength of Buddhism in the Far East during the last 35 years has developed in its layman's movement in the towns and cities. There are not less than 50,000 Buddhists in one group of

Chinese cities well known to the writer. Business men appreciate the silence and ritual, and still more the profound and often heart-searching lectures delivered on occasion by a Buddhist "master". They will sometimes spend a week-end in some famous temple which has been brought up to date with electric light, group discussion and modern philosophy, and then return refreshed in spirit. A religion that can do that for business men is not to be despised. Such men will give liberally towards a Buddhist charity, for the production of free literature or for aiding some promising candidate to attain "mastership". Their views may seem all wrong to us, but such men and women talk enthusiastically of "gaining salvation" and the wondrous peace that now possesses their hearts' (Rev. H. F. Wichens: *World Dominion*, Jan. 1955, p. 13). Similar passages could be quoted about the fruits of Islam or Hinduism in the hearts and lives of those who are prepared to take them seriously. We do no good to the Christian cause by comparing the best in Christianity with the worst in other religions. There are too many scandals in Christendom to allow us to get away with such unfair comparisons. We can, however, do two things which may point us along a road of creative relationship with men of other faiths. In the first place, we can see what the Bible itself has to say about other religions; in the second place, we can, by comparing Christianity as a religion with other religions and so, by discovering its relationship to them, decide whether they are different in degree or in kind. If the latter, there would seem to be nothing to do but to take the uncompromising position of Kraemer; if the former there would seem to be a strong case for opening a 'conversation' with them which may lead us nearer to the ultimate Reality to which all religions claim to be the Way.

The biblical approach to other religions has recently been considered in some detail by Dr. E. C. Dewick in his *Christian Attitude to Other Religions* (Cambridge, 1953), and we need do little more than summarize his findings. In the O.T. the dominant attitude to other religions is one of hostility. In the earlier books there is obvious hatred of the tribal gods of the nations with which Israel was at war. In the later prophetic writings, this hatred gives way to scorn and contempt (see e.g. Amos ix, 6; Is. xl, 18; xliv, 24; xlv, 18). Nevertheless, there is also a note of justice and kindness to all men. Amos sees that God is so far above men that he is just and impartial in his dealings with them (Amos i and ix, 7). Similarly in the book of Isaiah we get the notion that God's ways are not man's ways. Some of the prophets introduce a note of kindness in God's dealings with the heathen which goes beyond the demands of justice (e.g. Is. lvi, 6 ff and also Ruth and Jonah). But in general, the heathen are only of interest as potential converts. 'A genuine "concern" for the welfare of non-Jews and a desire to impart to them the blessings of the True Religion, is rare in the O.T. and a readiness to *appreciate* their religions is entirely absent.' The leaders of Israel dreaded above all the absorption of their

nation and its religion by their powerful neighbours. Perhaps intolerance was necessary to prevent this from happening.

There are, of course, the well-known references to the heathen as instruments in the fulfilment of God's purpose. Cyrus is God's Annointed One (Is. xlv, 1) and Nebuchadnezzar is 'God's Servant' (Jer xliii, 10). But when they have served their purpose they can be cast aside as a worn-out tool (Is. x, 5, 12).

Was there, in spite of Hebrew intransigence, much influence on their religion from other religions? The only appreciable impact was from Zoroastrianism as a result of the Exile. After the Exile appear beliefs in angels, demons, resurrection and judgment, but the debt to Zoroastrianism is never acknowledged and such incorporated elements are always moralized, spiritualized and judaized. From Greece, there is little influence in Palestine itself, especially after the Maccabean revolt, but there is some influence apparent on the Jews of the Dispersion who spoke Greek, and this is reflected in the Aprocryphal books, especially the Book of Wisdom.

If we turn to the attitude of Jesus himself to religion, we find that there is almost complete silence except in regard to Judaism itself. His main charge against contemporary Judaism was its exclusive nationalism and its externalism. These he saw as corrupting influences making of no effect the religion of the law and the prophets which he had come to fulfil. To the Samaritans, whose religion was a corrupt Judaism, he was tolerant, and went out of his way to show that such a religion could still bring forth good fruit and in the lives of its best men could judge the religion of the Pharisees (e.g. Luke x, 37 and xvii, 16).

In spite, however, of complete silence as to Jesus' attitude to other religions such as the mystery religions or Oriental cults, we can perhaps imagine what his attitude would be to them. His great emphasis on love can be seen by His treatment of foreigners (Lk. iv, 25-7) and enemies (Mt. x, 44). To quote from Dewick: 'Love which has its roots in God, must have its fruits in man; and the supreme test which Jesus would apply to every individual and every religious system is: Does it, or does it not, foster and help to create the spirit of love and the readiness to forgive which is of the very essence of God?'

We are left, however, with those 'exclusive' texts which require further attention, viz. Matt. xi, 27: 'All things have been delivered to me by my Father: and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and any to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.' Luke x, 22, which is the parallel text, and John xiv, 6: 'Jesus said to Thomas: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me." '

Everything depends here on whether we think of the Son as the historic Jesus or as the Word of God. Had the Word of God been operative only in Judaism up to the time of the Incarnation? This would hardly

square with the doctrine of God as universal Father or as One who had made Man in His own image. The early Christian apologists were in no doubt that God, through His eternal Word, had been active through other channels. Thus Justyn Martyr writes: 'We have learned and explained that Christ was the first begotten of God, being the Word or Reason, of which all men were partakers. They then who lived agreeably to reason were really Christians, even if they were considered Atheists, such as Socrates, Heracleitus and the like among the Greeks; and among other nations Abraham, Ananias, Azaraias, Misail and Elias and many others, the actions and even the names of whom we at present omit, knowing how tedious the enumerations would be. Those therefore who of old lived without right reason, the same were bad men and enemies to Christ and the murderers of those who lived agreeable to reason. Whereas they who ever lived or now live in a manner which reason could approve are truly Christian and free from fear or trouble' (*Apology*, ch. 46).

Dewick quotes two recent writers in similar strain. Professor C. H. Dodd: 'If indeed Jesus Christ is anything like what his followers have believed him to be, then we should expect to find in his teachings a large continuity with all that the spirit of God has revealed to men everywhere. And we do in fact find this, not only within the biblical revelation, but as the early Christian apologists were quick to point out, in other religions also. If Clement could recognize with enthusiasm the Christian element in the teaching of Socrates and Plato, we need never hesitate to give full justice to the affinity of Christianity with the best in Confucianism or Mahayama Buddhism' (*The Authority of the Bible*, p. 279). And Archbishop William Temple: 'By the Word of God, that is to say by Jesus Christ, Isaiah and Plato, Zoroaster, Buddha and Confucius uttered and wrote such truths as they declared. There is only one divine light and every man in his own measure is enlightened by it' (*Readings in St. John's Gospel*, Vol I, p. 10).

Dr. Dewick goes on to suggest that this line of reasoning would seem to be that of St. Paul himself. In Romans ii, 9-15, we read: 'There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek. But glory and honour and peace for everyone that does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shews no partiality. All who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law. For it is not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God but the doers of the Law who will be justified. When Gentiles that have not the Law do by nature what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law. They show that what the Law requires is written on their hearts, while their consciences also bear witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them, on that day when, according to my Gospel, God judges the secrets of men

by Christ Jesus.' Similarly in Acts xiv, 16, when the people of Lystra wanted to deify Paul and Barnabas, the Apostle says: 'In past generations God allowed all nations to walk in their own ways; yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.' The New Testament writers are unanimous about one thing; God is the God of all men and has not been indifferent to their welfare throughout the ages. They could not imagine that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ could have left men with no help or guidance in their earthly pilgrimage. Had they known of the other great religions of the world, they would certainly have seen the eternal Word at work through them revealing to men precious truths about the nature of God and of themselves.

Having examined the biblical attitude to other religions, we turn to a discussion of two questions, which although of long standing, still await an answer. To-day the need for such an answer is particularly pressing, for it is not now being asked only, or even primarily by Christians, but by those of other faiths who are increasingly sensitive about the claims which Christianity makes for its unique status as the only true religion. The first question is this. Is the Old Testament the only possible *preparatio evangelica*, or can it be taken that the work of the Holy Spirit in Buddhism, Hinduism or Confucianism is as effective a preparation for Christianity as was Judaism, and that their sacred books can therefore be substituted for the Hebrew Scriptures? This question is one that is being increasingly asked by Christians of the Younger Churches. Professor Godfrey Phillips in his *The Old Testament and the World Church* gives three examples of this attitude: (*a*) an Indian Christian, principal of a college, says: 'I shall drop the Old Testament. This college is Indian, and its right introduction to the sublime truth which Christ revealed is through the Upanishads and the Hagavadgita'; (*b*) from an African: 'Are our people not sufficiently disposed to polygamy without your teaching them the Old Testament stories of polygamous heroes?'; (*c*) a Chinese pastor says: 'We don't need Moses and Elijah. It is enough to teach men about God as Jesus reveals him' (quoted by Dewick, p. 194).

Understandable as this protest is, it cannot be accepted, for to do so would be to uproot Christianity from history. It would be only too easy to show that Christian morality was a development of Confucian ethics, or that Christ himself was no more than a religious genius for whose way of life the Buddha had prepared the way. But if Jesus Christ is to be presented to men as Saviour and Lord, he must be shown as the end point of a historic process of which the Old Testament is the record. In short, it is impossible to understand or accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord without knowing the religious development of the people of Israel which formed the background of his life. This is not to deny that the

Old Testament must be presented with great care to non-Christian peoples to-day, even as it was in the early days of the Church. There are two main problems in presenting the Old Testament to non-Christian people. The first is its extreme nationalism and the second its apparent justification of actions which would be condemned by the highest morality of the peoples themselves. The answer to this would seem to be that parts of the Old Testament only should be translated for the use of the uneducated, and it should always be taught in the Church. There is nothing to be said for the broadcast distribution of the whole of the Old Testament in places where the Church is not able to supply adequately trained instructors. Moreover, there seems no reason why the training of the young in school and college, including theological colleges, should not include instruction in the best religious and ethical insights of their own people. This is only to recognize in practice what has already been admitted, that God has spoken in times past in divers ways, both in Judaism and in other faiths, and Christians should not be afraid to acknowledge this and to welcome it.

Our second question is more difficult and speculative since it refers, not to the Old Testament alone, but to the Christian faith as it has become known to us in the West, and which we are asking people all over the world to accept as the final and complete revelation of God. The question is this: Must Christianity, as we know it, totally replace or fulfil the other great world faiths? If we accept the former, there is no more to be said; but if we accept the latter, it surely means that Christianity as we have known it will be modified by its contact with the other religions and that a conversation with them must be started. Any adequate discussion of this question would lead us far from the scope of this paper into the very nature of religion itself. We would, however, mention Prof. H. H. Farmer's most important book, *Revelation and Religion* (London, 1954). Dr. Farmer is concerned to enumerate the qualities which may be said to compose religion as such and then to show that every religion, including empirical Christianity, has over-emphasized one or more of these at the expense of the others. True Christianity, he believes, is the norm for religion in that it holds these ingredients in perfect balance. But such true Christianity has never yet appeared, and it is certain that the form which it has now taken in the West over-emphasizes immanence at the expense of transcendance and individuality at the expense of community. It has, moreover, been so corrupted by nationalism that it is in danger of becoming the spiritual drive to world destruction unless it can, in time, recover its true supra-national character and be strong enough to call its own adherents to their prior allegiance to the authority of a universal God who is the Father of all men.

In the present world situation, the moral leadership of the world is passing to India precisely because the reverence for life which is one of

Hinduism's main emphases is seen to be the only effective answer to a threat to man's very existence on this planet. In other words, it may be that in the providence of God, the function of the other world religions is to challenge Christian civilization and the Christian Church at those points where empirical Christianity is most false to true Christian spirituality. If this be so, it will be well for the Church to have the grace and humility to learn from the other religions. It would not be the first time that God has shown that he is not confined to any one religion or race, but that he is free to choose whom he will through whom to work out his sovereign purpose.

*THE REAL SIGNIFICANCE OF 'DE-MYTHOLOGIZING'

By John Wren Lewis

The stir which has been caused in recent years, both inside and outside theological circles, by Dr. Rudolf Bultmann's ideas about 'de-mythologizing' the Christian gospel might well seem surprising to anyone at all familiar with the religious controversies of the last century. For there does not appear to be anything wildly new about Dr. Bultmann's thesis. He has called attention to correspondence between the ideas of the New Testament writers and those of the mystery-religions and other cults of the Graeco-Roman civilization, but scholars have been arguing about that since well before Sir James Frazer published *The Golden Bough*. Nor is there anything very new about the suggestion that if Christianity has any core of truth for our own day it can only be found by stripping traditional theology of all the trappings derived from the long-dead world-view of classical antiquity: that has been the programme of 'modernist' Christianity, and indeed of many Christian writers who would not call themselves modernists at all, for at least five or six decades.

Why then has Dr. Bultmann aroused such interest? The answer, I believe, lies in the fact that by using the term 'de-mythologizing' he has put his finger on the *psychological* problem underlying these now hoary theological controversies, and it is a psychological problem which is particularly characteristic of our age. He is not the only person who has raised it. A number of other scholars, in quite different fields, have begun to draw attention to it independently. My purpose in this article is to bring that problem into focus and explore it, in a preliminary way, in its own right, largely in the hope of starting further discussion of it.

Readers of the *Modern Churchman* can find an admirable summary of Bultmann's thesis in an article by Professor S. G. F. Brandon in the issue for June, 1953. I shall not attempt to re-state it in detail. It will

*This article is an expansion and a development of a thesis which I first put forward in two articles in *The Church of England Newspaper* in February, 1957.

suffice for my purpose to recall that the distinctive thing about his argument is its insistence upon the *consistent wholeness* of the world-view of the New Testament writers and other early Christians. It is quite false, he says, to take their utterances at their face value, making occasional allowances for 'pre-scientific' ideas about the world which we no longer accept, as is usually done by traditional and modernist exegeticists alike. The odd pre-scientific ideas which obtrude themselves here and there in the New Testament are not merely marginal to their authors' thought: there is no central core of doctrine which we can sort out from its association with primitive notions about the world. On the contrary, the whole meaning of the gospel was seen by these people in terms of their pre-scientific world-view, which differed from ours not in detail but in its entire structure. It was not simply an old-fashioned, crude or out-of-date scientific outlook: it was not a scientific outlook at all, but a *dramatic* one. The physical world was seen as no more than a veil for hierarchies of quasi-personal spiritual forces which really determined human life and destiny: prominent amongst these were the astrological 'principalities and powers' to which St. Paul referred. Men described the activities of these powers in terms of myths because that was the only way in which they could be described. It was not believed possible to live life on the basis of direct knowledge of the real world: the best that could be done was to live *ritualistically* in terms of the dramatic patterns which the great myths set forth. One of these myths, perhaps the most important, was that which asserted that the 'present age' (i.e. the current astrological epoch) was dominated by *evil* powers, in rebellion against the Supreme Power, and Bultmann maintains that detailed analysis shows how this view was taken for granted by those who proclaimed the Christian message, even in utterances which at first sight appear to have nothing to do with astrology or similar myths, and which we are wont to read directly in terms of our own outlook. The Christian proclamation *was* that the hold of these demonic powers had been broken by a long-foretold mysterious 'saving-event' which itself could only be described in mythological terms as the suffering and death of God's Son. Not only the 'metaphysical', but also the historical, assertions of the New Testament are completely conditioned by this mythological preconception, Bultmann argues. We are not presented with a portrait of an actual man, from whose deeds and sayings we are at liberty to draw our own conclusions. The gospels give us, rather, a series of stories designed, often in minute detail, to identify Jesus of Nazareth with the mysterious 'Saviour-being' of the current mythology — to identify Him, for example, as the inaugurator of the new Aquarian astrological age.

Now whatever may be the truth about particular parts of this thesis, as far as the New Testament is concerned, I think the notion of a mythological *way of thinking* is an extremely important one, and Bultmann's

real significance lies in his having brought it into the forefront of discussion. And the first thing to be said about it is that it is by no means only a thing of the past. Bultmann himself asserts quite roundly that there can be no question of modern man's returning to the mythological world-view, since his outlook is radically different: we may persuade ourselves—very large numbers of religious thinkers do—that we accept particular objective metaphysical concepts which we term 'theistic', but we deceive ourselves, Bultmann believes, if we think that we mean anything like the same thing by them as the New Testament Christians, since we are bound, as children of our age, to see the world *mainly* in scientific terms, and although some of us may choose to use mythological notions as handy metaphors, that is an utterly different thing from living out the whole of life in terms of them. This is, I believe, profoundly true of the most typical modern *educated* man, but it is by no means universally true. There are very large numbers of people who still approach life in mythological terms—not in darkest Africa, but in large areas of Europe. To believe, as millions of Catholics do, that sins are not just offences against society, or against other people, but are *really* (in some incomprehensible way) the recrucifixion of Christ, is to live mythologically. So it is to believe, as millions of Protestants do, that there is an occult entity called the soul which has to be described mythologically as something white, which is stained by sin and needs to be made clean again either by purgation through moral effort or by being 'washed in the blood of the Lamb'. In both these cases, the actual events of experience are thought of as being given significance by something else which cannot be experienced, but only imagined, and that is the essence of the mythological way of thinking. Where Bultmann is right, even about such people as this, is that their myths probably bear very little relationship to those of the original Christians. The 'ordinary, simple Christianity' of to-day stands just as much condemned by Bultmann's criticisms as do the more rationalistic or modernist theologies—all alike are misinterpretations of the New Testament, albeit very different ones.

The second point I think needs to be made is that the contrast between the mythological and non-mythological ways of thinking is absolutely fundamental, and in so far as Bultmann is correct in describing the typical modern outlook as non-mythological, he is bringing out one of its most important characteristics. This is indeed something which fixes a great gulf between our culture and the cultures of earlier ages which were based upon the mythological outlook, as Bultmann realizes—but precisely because mythological thinking is by no means a thing of the past, the same gulf in fact runs right through our own culture itself. Moreover, there are a great many moderns who are by no means happy about their situation in this respect—witness the spate of books in which the modern mind is described as 'disinherited'. It was really this problem, I believe,

which at once led to, and at the same time confused, the majority of arguments about the validity of religious notions during the past century. For it is a matter of common experience that although these arguments purport to be about various objective metaphysical concepts, like the existence of God or of life after death, the opposing sides find it notoriously difficult to convince one another even when the arguments presented appear to be rigidly logical. It is always a source of puzzled bewilderment to the proponents of religious ideas that their opponents just are not impressed by (for example) the possibility of heaven and hell: how can men possibly treat such terrible issues with anything less than agonized concern, even if they do have doubts? On the other hand, very large numbers of those who reject religious concepts do so not because they have found arguments to discredit them, but rather because they cannot somehow even begin to take them seriously. We are only just beginning to realize that the real dividing issue in these arguments is in many cases not the 'objective' proposition under discussion but a complete difference of opinion about the *subjective attitudes* which are proper to life. True, the arguments do not usually involve people whose attitude to life is *wholly* mythological—both sides in general share to some extent in the non-mythological outlook of 'modern man'. The difference is between people who take the modern attitude completely for granted and people who are, to a greater or less degree, unhappy about it. What Bultmann has done, by describing the mythological world-view so clearly in relation to early Christian times, has been to bring this subjective issue into people's consciousness.

He is not alone in this, as I said at the beginning. What he has done in the context of theology as such, a number of writers have been doing for some time in the world of literary and artistic criticism. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World-Picture*, for example, and Rosamund Tuve's *Elizabethan Imagery*, have had the effect of revealing a unity of world-outlook underlying the plays of Shakespeare which is in many ways similar to that which Bultmann describes as underlying the New Testament, and has been equally unsuspected by most readers during the last century or so. It was a world-view in which the organization of the human soul, the hierarchies of society, the patterns of the stars and the events of history were all alike supposed to reflect the same invisible activities of spiritual powers 'behind the veil', and so to be able to influence one another through the sympathetic magic of analogy and image. Professor Gombrich has shown that the same world-view underlay the work of painters and emblem-designers, most of whom are not usually thought of as 'symbolic' artists at all, right up to Renaissance times.[1] As a result of all these studies a number of writers who approach philosophy and

[1]E. H. Gombrich: *Icones Symbolicae*, The Visual Image in Neo-Platonic Thought; *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XI, 1948.

theology from the realm of the arts have in recent years begun to formulate criticisms of the 'modern mind' quite explicitly in terms of its inability, or unwillingness, to think mythologically. Instead of criticizing 'modern materialism', or 'the scientific age', for its lack of this or that metaphysical belief, as was the general rule in the last century (and is still the rule amongst most theological critics), quite a few voices can now be heard saying that the real 'Dilemma of Being Modern' (to use the actual title of a recent book by one such critic in the field of visual art, Dr. J. P. Hodin) is that of not approaching life and experience *symbolically* or mythologically. The effect of Bultmann's work is likely to be that the theologians will come to see their problem in these terms too. Indeed, some have begun to do so already: 're-mythologizing' is becoming a theological catchword.

When Bultmann asserts that modern man cannot hope to return to the mythological world-view, or even make any sort of *rapprochement* with it, he is accepting implicitly the diagnosis of the modern situation which was propounded in its classical form by Auguste Comte, the 'father of the science of sociology'. As is well known, Comte claimed to show that a clear pattern of evolution could be traced in human society, involving three interpenetrating but distinguishable stages, and he chose, with an insight to which I do not believe nearly enough credit has been given, to describe these stages in terms of the *mental outlook* underlying men's social relationships and moral codes. The earliest stage of civilized society he called the *theological stage*, because it was characterized by the fact that men sought the explanation for things in terms of the activity of personal 'gods' or 'spirits' behind the scenes. In this stage social institutions were seen as having in one way or another divine ordinance, and religion and morality inevitably took the form of ritualistic attempts to 'come to terms' or 'get into harmony' with the occult powers. Here, clearly, Comte was seeing exactly the same thing as Bultmann has seen when he describes the cultures of the ancient world as founded upon a *mythische Weltbild*. This primitive state was in due course superseded, Comte held, because the development of human intellect and social institutions brought about evolution to a new position wherein the 'gods' and 'spirits' of primitive mythology were replaced by general abstract metaphysical principles: Comte called this the second stage of social evolution and named it the metaphysical stage. It did not, he insisted, represent any really radical departure from the theological stage, since the events of experience were still explained by reference to occult principles behind experience: it merely involved a transition to greater generality and abstractness, which was probably essential before any further advance could be made, but in many ways represented pure loss to society, inasmuch as abstract ideas lack the power to move people and very general moral principles can only apply to actual situations through more and more casuistic interpretations. The

real adulthood of human society, Comte believed, was only reached when it evolved to a third stage which he named 'positive'. This involved a radical break with the past, inasmuch as it arrived when men were sufficiently developed intellectually to abandon all attempts to explain experience in occult or metaphysical terms and turned instead to finding purely positive scientific correlations between the actual events of experience. Comte held that this was the stage the human race was reaching in his own time, and he tried to work out its practical implications in terms of a 'religion of humanity' (leaving out all transcendent realities) and a morality based entirely on the sociological study of groups.

Of course, religious apologists of Comte's own day and subsequent decades made plenty of attempts to 'refute' his thesis, but this was almost always done by means of philosophical arguments designed to prove that metaphysical propositions were objectively 'true'. Comte's emphasis on the subjective aspect of the matter was by-passed by most of his theological critics, and during the last thirty years or so his name has been largely forgotten in religious circles: the general impression has got around that his position was somehow 'discredited'. In some of its sociological aspects of course it has been, but in this particular aspect his diagnosis of the modern situation remains, I am sure, of great importance, and the effect of Bultmann's work is, really, to force theologians to take it seriously—although Bultmann himself does not, as far as I know, make any explicit reference to Comte; he simply takes his diagnosis for granted.

Bultmann's own beliefs about the implications of his work are of course quite different from Comte's. He does not think that Christianity need be abandoned. He believes it needs to be 'de-mythologized': in other words, our task must be to try to discover *what the whole mythological system of fall and redemption meant for the early Christians in terms of their actual 'existential' experience*, and we must then acknowledge that if the 'preaching of Christ crucified and risen' could meet that existential need for them, so it may, in non-mythological terms, for us to-day. This is something utterly different from Comte's 'religion of humanity', in which the individual was to be utterly subordinated to the 'greater being' of his social group. The two resemble each other only in agreeing that modern man cannot and should not try to think of his life as a 'drama of the invisible', acted out in relation to invisible occult powers behind and beyond actual experience. The effect of Bultmann's work is to force theologians to realize that this position cannot be rebutted simply by attempts to prove the 'truth' of particular metaphysical propositions. It is the mythological (or, in Comte's term, the theological) *way of looking at the world* which is at stake, and in recent years a number of religious writers have begun to argue quite explicitly that religious belief stands or falls with men's ability to think in this way. In particular, this is the core of Dr. Austin Farrar's criticism of Bultmann.

Dr. Farrar freely admits that there may be some aspects of the early Christian world-view which we cannot accept to-day—notably, those aspects in which the myths come nearest to being quasi-scientific—but he contends that to try to de-mythologize the Gospel *altogether* is to take the heart out of it. It is necessary rather for modern man to learn that his unwillingness to think mythologically is a limitation which blinds him to large tracts of reality. The first challenge of the Gospel to modern man, in Dr. Farrar's view, is to re-learn the lost art of symbolic thinking. It is not altogether surprising that this, the first really four-square challenge thrown down to Bultmann from a British theologian, has come from a man who has done if anything more than Bultmann himself to try to demonstrate that the New Testament books are elaborately constructed mythological patterns (with copious references to astrological and similar lore) rather than straightforward records. The two are to a large extent agreed that the mythological world-view of the New Testament is an integral whole which has either to be taken or left: their disagreement lies in Bultmann's assumption that it is sheerly dishonest, if not impossible, for any modern man to try to swallow it, whereas Farrar believes we badly need to learn to do just that.

Which of them is right? My answer would be that they are both wrong, although Bultmann is the more nearly right of the two. But before I attempt to evaluate this issue, there are two other contributions to the discussion, coming from quite different sources and having no direct reference to Bultmann, which I should like to mention.

I have already mentioned that there are quite a number of writers who approach theology from the field of the arts who have for some time been criticizing the modern scientific world-view as limited by its inability to think mythologically. Something of this sort lies behind Mr. T. S. Eliot's literary criticism, with its claim that the birth of the modern world-view in the seventeenth century brought about a 'dissociation of sensibility' which has been fatal for poetry, but a far more explicit argument for the importance of mythological thinking has been made by Miss Kathleen Raine. A number of the writers who have ventured into this field have drawn powerful support from the psychology of Dr. C. G. Jung (for example, J. B. Priestly and Jacquetta Hawkes). Jung is not a thinker noted for his consistency, and there are a great many passages in his writings where he seems to suggest that modern man's rejection of traditional mythology is irrevocable and perhaps even desirable, but in other places he has quite definitely committed himself to the assertion that modern man's great psychological lack is his failure to live 'a symbolic life'. The primitives who believe that their work and play are all part of a great rite which helps the sun to journey across the sky are healthier than we are, Jung said on one such occasion: and if to-day we no longer find traditional religious mythology convincing, we need to find a new mythology. There

can be little doubt that this is exactly what most of Jung's followers are doing. They have simply replaced the old idea of an invisible world behind experience by the mysterious 'collective unconscious', and are busy building up a whole new mythology of 'archetypes'. This movement is often quoted by literary people who are unhappy about the positivism of the modern mind, and recently theological writers have begun to appeal to it as well. Dr. Dillistone, for example, makes it one of the foundation-stones of his justification for Christian worship in his book, *Christianity and Symbolism*, and it is even commoner amongst French Catholic theologians like Danielou. I am sure we are due to see more and more appeals made to Jung in the Christian apologetics of the next few years.

The other factor leading Christian philosophers in the direction of 'return to mythology' is the need to come to terms with the logical criticisms made of traditional metaphysics by modern 'logical positivist' philosophy. A notable example of this was the paper given to the 1955 Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen by Mr. Alasdair MacIntyre (printed in the appropriate Conference number of the *Modern Churchman*). Mr. MacIntyre, one of the brightest of our younger philosophers and co-editor of *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, argued on this occasion that religious propositions are essentially mythological in the sense that they are stories enabling us to live out our lives in the light of something we believe to be 'true', although we cannot at present see how it can be true, and this, he claimed, is the whole adventure of religion. This too is a position I think we are going to see taken up increasingly by philisophers who cannot see how to refute the positivist criticisms of metaphysics yet still want to justify 'being religious'. Something like it is very common amongst the followers of Karl Barth.

What then are we to make of this demand for 're-mythologizing the modern mind'? I should like to enter a plea that in discussing it attention should be given to the findings of orthodox psychoanalysis (which will remains, in spite of Jung, the most fruitful school of psychological investigation in the modern world) concerning the *emotional* forces behind the two contrasting psychological attitudes. This may seem a strange proceeding to scholars brought up to consider theology as an objective logical discipline: it is in fact by no means uncommon nowadays for theologians to produce works in which the whole right of psychologists to pronounce upon religious questions is disputed, on the ground that the psychological *origin* of a belief has no bearing whatever upon the question of its truth. In fact, however, the Founder of Christianity would seem to have taken a different view. He never ceased to emphasize the dependence of men's ability to know the truth about God upon the purity of their motives, and it is surely reasonable enough to argue that, just as a distorted lens gives a false view of objects through it, so an emotionally distorted mind is likely to have a false idea of the world it perceives and seeks to under-

stand. And this need not be a circular argument, for there are many distortions of lenses which can be detected without appeal to how known objects are seen through them—dirt on the surface, for example; and there are criteria by which the emotional reliability of a man's mind may be judged without appeal to presuppositions about whether or not it is 'normal' to have religious beliefs. It is in just this way that the evidence of psychoanalysis is relevant to the discussion of this issue of the 'validity' of a mythological approach to life.

For psychoanalysis has established, more or less beyond doubt, that the tendency to invoke occult forces to explain what happens in experience denotes a *diseased* emotional life—it denotes in fact that the person in question is trying to escape from facing up to the full impact of experience itself, particularly the experience of relationships with other people. The technical name for it is paranoia; this term is usually used in a more restricted sense to describe a state in which a man feels himself *persecuted* by occult powers, but in fact it is easy to show that from a psychological point of view there is no final distinction between one sort of belief in occult forces and another, for belief in occult powers which are benevolent or neutral can pass over into belief in persecuting occult powers very readily with a slight change in the person's circumstances. When Freud described religion as 'the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity' it was this whole psychological disposition he was referring to, and not just the special case of belief in a single God who is a 'projected father-image" as is often assumed in discussions of the matter. Freud's critics are wont to try to argue that this evaluation of religion rested upon an uncritical assumption of nineteenth-century materialism (or, we might say, upon taking the non-mythological modern outlook for granted), but this is simply not true. His evaluation was based upon clinical experience, in which mythological beliefs were actually *shown*, under analysis, to be symbolic means of escaping from aspects of actual experience which for various reasons people feared to face, and this is still being demonstrated again and again by psychoanalysts. Nor can this be dismissed on the ground that only psychologically diseased persons are psycho-analysed, so that no general conclusion about the mythological attitude can be drawn from such findings. The important thing which psychoanalysis has discovered is that there is no sharp dividing-line between normal and abnormal psychology. There are certain tendencies in the human mind which lead to psychosis when exaggerated, and this tendency to feel life dominated by occult powers is one of them. Consequently religious mania and the ordinary mythological mode of thinking are not different in kind, but only in degree.

In the light of these findings, it seems to me that the whole 're-mythologizing' movement looks extremely suspicious, and that in particular those apologists who argue that the cause of religion stands or falls

with the ability to think mythologically are doing their cause no service at all, since it would follow, if this were so, that Freud was right in identifying religion *as such* with neurosis. One of the interesting things about Bultmann is his belief that the Christian Gospel may still have some significance apart from the *mythische Weltbild*, and to my mind *this* is the really significant question for theology in our day. In trying to answer it I think it is relevant to bear in mind one of the philosophical criticisms which is commonly made of Freud's case against religion, namely, that it begs the question of why men should ever make mythological 'projections' at all. True, this argument is usually used to try to show that there must be some metaphysical reality to justify the 'projections', and *that*, I am sure, is quite false. On the contrary, I think the psychoanalytic findings show up metaphysics in exactly the same suspicious light as mythology—indeed they bear out entirely Comte's contention that metaphysics are only disguised myths, elaborate intellectual devices used to cover up beliefs which are, underneath, the same as those of the mythological world-view. Consequently I feel the neo-Thomists who argue that reality is the 'intelligible being' which we grasp by intellectual understanding, rather than anything we can experience directly, are really betraying the religious cause into the hands of its Freudian critics just as surely as the 're-mythologizers': both alike are identifying religion with a turning-away from experience. But the philosophical criticism of Freud's case *can* be used to make quite a different point, namely, that the wish to escape from experience could not take the form of 'projections' of spiritual powers into 'the beyond' unless there were some qualities *in experience itself* to give rise to the appropriate emotional constellation in the first place.

This argument is particularly telling, to my mind, in relation to the distinctive 'religious' emotion which Rudolf Otto called 'numinous awe'. I believe he succeeded in showing, in *The Idea of the Holy*, that it is psychologically impossible to 'reduce' this emotion to anything else. Consequently it seems to me there must be something in actual experience to give rise to it before it can get 'projected', and if experience were purely biological in character, as Freud assumed, this would be impossible. I accordingly think Bultmann is justified in his contention that the great myths arose because of some real existential need of human beings (rather than, as the strict Freudian argument would maintain, merely because of fear of life). I do not myself believe Bultmann has gone nearly far enough in divining what this need is: here, I think, his otherwise valuable concentration upon the subjective aspect of the matter has been *too* exclusive. If men have an existential need of this kind it must, to my mind, be because of some absolutely objective feature in experience. Experience must, in fact, include *some* experience of a reality which transcends experience—a transcendent reality quite as objective as any

dogmatic theologian could desire. I have developed elsewhere[2] the thesis that love is this reality—that love (Freud's *libido,* which he himself came in the end to call 'eternal Eros') is in truth a Being in its (or rather His) own right, fully justifying the language which theology uses to describe God. I am well aware that this particular thesis is open to misunderstanding, and there may be other, far better ways of expressing what I mean. What I am quite sure about, however, is that religious belief must either be rooted firmly in experience in this way or else abandoned altogether, as Freud maintained, as an illusion without a future. (I also think —although I cannot develop the thesis here—that the same holds good in relation to the criticism made of religion on social grounds by Feuerbach and Marx.[3])

But having said this, I think there is one further question that must be raised, although I am by no means so sure of the answer to it. Bultmann assumes that the 'de-mythologized' Gospel is a new thing which still has to be created, just as Comte thought he had to create a religion of humanity which would take up the valid elements in theology and metaphysics into an entirely new structure—and more generally, modernism has almost always seen its task in terms of removing mythological trappings which cling to Christianity from earlier times. The psychoanalytic approach to the problem of mythology, however, leads me to wonder whether we are right in assuming that the non-mythological way of thinking is exclusively modern, any more than modern civilization is exclusively non-mythological. If mythology and metaphysics were simply primitive or childish *intellectual* devices for explaining natural events, as is generally assumed by those who take the 'modern mind' for granted, then it is conceivable that human society might just 'grow out of them', as Comte maintained—but men do not just 'grow out of' neuroses. On the contrary, neurotic attitudes are essentially inhibitions of growth, precisely because they involve the refusal to face experience. I therefore wonder whether, instead of thinking of the non-mythological attitude as something which has evolved out of the mythological, we ought not

[2]In particular in my M.C.U. pamphlet, *Return to the Roots*, and in my paper on the reinterpretation of Christianity in the 1956 Conference number of the *Modern Churchman*.

[3]Obviously the biggest problem raised by this assertion is that of 'life beyond death'. This is almost universally thought of in terms of a 'penetration behind the veil', in which all the religious realities we can only imagine now are revealed 'face to face'. Personally, I would say that if the doctrine of life beyond death were really of this kind in essence, then it would have to be ranked as 'bourgeois escapist illusion', but I am quite convinced, in this particular case, that the true Jewish-Christian doctrine of *resurrection* is nothing like this at all. It is rather the doctrine of *a transformation of this world* in 'the age to come'—a transformation in which the transcendence of human personality over time and space, which we can already know in experience fragmentarily, is given physical embodiment, in a manner which we can also find foreshadowed in present experience in psycho-somatic healing.

rather to explore the possibility that the mythological attitude is a perversion, *taking place afresh in every generation*, of the non-mythological. Of course, if Freud were right, and religion were a pure illusion entirely derived from neurosis, then it would not be possible to believe this, but if it be true that there are some elements *in experience* which demand a 'religious' orientation *may it not be that myths were created in the first place in order to describe these elements in experience, quite consciously, and only afterwards perverted by being 'projected' into an imaginary occult world*? May not Bultmann, in particular, have misjudged early Christianity by seeing it all through the distorting lens of a perversion, which grew up alongside the genuine article, using very similar language and symbolism, until it practically dominated the field? For my own part, I believe this to be the case. I find Professor MacMurray's concept of 'pseudo-religion', in his book *Creative Society*, a convincing one. I certainly believe we can trace in the gospel records a picture of Jesus, coming through all the mythological elaborations, as a man who used myth quite consciously to express the truth of experience, rather than letting myth use Him, and I believe we can find warnings in the New Testament, and all other great religious writings, which when properly understood may be seen as intended to guard against *precisely this possibility of perverting true religious ideas by 'projecting' them*. Consequently I believe that 'de-mythologizing' may in fact be not so much taking us forward to a mature faith—although it is doing that—as restoring the Gospel in its original form.

Of course, there *is* a difference between our present age and earlier ages. There *has* been a 'social evolution' on the lines described by Comte. But I do not think, in the light of the psychoanalytic evidence, that we can treat it as a mere matter of *growth*. A change in the patterns of social organization and convention which leads away from the escapism of 'occult other-worldliness' to the realism of 'true humanism' must be the social counterpart of psychological healing, and psychological healing, as all schools of psychotherapy agree, only comes about through a profound emotional shock. Neurotic fear is overcome when the impact of an unusual personality breaks down barriers and causes *libido* to flow. I should like to conclude by suggesting that the 'social evolution' of European society, which produced the 'emancipation' from occult other-worldliness at the beginning of the 'modern' period, may perhaps have been due to the gradual working-out of the long-suppressed effects of the impact of the personality of Christ, releasing a tradition of spontaneity in love which even the worst perversions of the Church could not smother for ever. If this is so, the Protestant Reformers were right when they saw their 'de-mythologizing' activities (and their attack on scholastic metaphysics) as a 'releasing of Christ from ecclesiastical grave-clothes', and it is in the same spirit that we to-day might view the attempt to create what Dietrich Bonhoffer called the 'mature' Christianity of the coming age.

PROBLEMS FOR CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS*

By H. E. Root, M.A., Fellow and Dean of Emmanuel College, Cambridge

Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.—I Peter iii, 15.

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.—John ix, 41.

What is it that we say when we are asked to give reasons for the hope—the faith— that is in us? And how do we show that our reasons are given with meekness and fear? These are the questions which call into being that type of theology called Apologetic, and these words in I Peter have often been taken as the very charter of the Apologist's work. I do not propose in this sermon to catalogue the reasons which are traditionally given, least of all to offer any new or hitherto unused reasons. I doubt that any exist. Nor do I propose to discuss the anterior question—a most important and difficult one—What *is it* to give reasons for a religious faith or belief? How is it like or unlike giving reasons for beliefs of other sorts, scientific or moral or political? But these are questions to which Christian apologists must increasingly address themselves.

What I wish to do is to remind you of some of the obvious difficulties and oddities of our present situation, the situation in which any apologist must work out his application of those words in I Peter.

It is widely recognized that there are very grave difficulties in the way of any apologetic to-day—our concern, for example, with the problem of communication—and this widespread recognition is one of the oddities of the situation. For this reason: there are many things that might have led us to think we had finally solved the outstanding problems of only a few years ago. There has, for one thing, been a *sort* of resolution of the science *v.* religion argument. (Only a *sort* of resolution, because it often looks more like a temporary agreement upon a policy of co-existence.) There are also unmistakable signs of a renewed interest in Christianity among educated and thoughtful people everywhere, and accompanying this a marked decline in that rationalistic variety of humanism which now seems strangely dated to believer and unbeliever alike. These signs could be taken as indications that the burden of the apologist has now a new lightness. But somehow we do not take them this way, and uneasiness remains.

Part of the reason for this is that despite welcome encouragements, the traditional forms of apologetic—the clothing of the traditional reasons for belief—carry less weight than we should like with two very important sections of the general public: the great numerical majority of simple working people and the small group, at the other extreme, of the intellectually and philosophically sophisticated. The failure of traditional

*A sermon delivered before the University of Cambridge on January 20th, 1957

apologetic with the first and largest of these groups must make us suspect the adequacy of one thing which is often said about the problem in general: viz. that *of course* Christian faith is a stumbling-block to those wise in their own eyes, after the wisdom of the world. Such a description, though no doubt appropriate to some in St. Paul's Athenian audience, does not really fit the majority of people to-day, or indeed at any time. Of a great many simple people it would be more accurate to say that Christian faith seems not so much a stumbling-block, or foolishness, as an irrelevance even when comprehensible. Recent evidence of this was given by Mr. Billy Graham. Whatever else might be said of Mr. Graham's apologetic, it makes use of many traditional forms, words and ideas, which have the air of great simplicity. Yet when he was in this place he admitted quite openly on at least one occasion that his campaigns have an all but negligible effect upon this great mass of ordinary working people. There may be those amongst the sophisticated who have beheld the light and consciously refused it, but this could be said only in the most far-fetched way of the great majority.

When we consider the problem of apologetic, this is part of the given. We are obliged to think in terms of what is and what is not meaningful to our contemporaries. And it is not the same as that of the first century, or the thirteenth, or the nineteenth.

To start here is no doubt to begin reasonably, but it leads directly to our next difficulty. We have the idea, so widely held that it is seldom expressed in so many words, that the Christian believer, and the theologian *par excellence*, just 'knows' what the real content of belief is, the essence of Christianity. All he has to do is to state this content, express this meaning, in ways which we will call comprehensible if they work and incomprehensible if they don't. We think of it after the model of a straightforward translation of ideas and concepts from one language to another, even as we translate the Hebrew and Greek of scripture into modern tongues. But this way of looking at it is fraught with trouble. For how are we to pin down this real and essential content which is alleged to be so readily separable from particular expressions? Recently we have seen very bold efforts to do it. And how very different are the answers of, say, Professor Bultmann, Professor Braithwaite and Mr. Aldous Huxley. This very variety establishes the intricacy if not the impossibility of setting down the one and only *real* meaning of the traditional forms. We want to know how one ever could determine and then secure agreement to this essential content. By comparison the formulation of the Conciliar creeds was child's play. Such criticism is familiar and pointed, but we cannot afford to rest in it, for it contributes little to the solution of the practical problems which men like Bultmann are trying to see their way through.

With this background in mind, I should like to mention two particular

features out of many which characterize the problem which our situation poses for the apologist. First, that wide gulf which separates the serious, the thoughtful and informed believer from his unbelieving neighbour, whether simple or sophisticated. The gulf is partly a matter of knowledge, of accurate information about the Bible, the fundamental doctrines, and the practice and discipline of the Church. There is a body of largely factual knowledge which we assume to be necessary, whatever disagreements there may be about its interpretation or ultimate essence. Now at times many of use are tempted (I know that I am) to talk as though this were almost the whole of the story. We suppose that if there were only a wider dissemination of the facts about Christianity and the ignorance dispelled, those outside would almost automatically come inside. About this view there is something of the rationalist's optimism, an optimism we find questionable when manifested in other places. A measure of accurate information is without doubt necessary, but it is when we are agreed upon the facts that our fundamental differences begin to show themselves. Let us say that a serious man is willing to receive instruction, that he is brought right up to date about the historical facts of scripture, the development of doctrine and the practice of the Church. Let him also be shown case histories to illustrate the effects of belief upon individual lives. No matter how thorough the instruction, he will have questions, matters on which there are grounds for historical doubt, questions about competing doctrinal opinion. But putting all these on one side, let us imagine a working agreement about a great many facts. Just here, instruction turns into something quite different. The information now acquired, our instructed man sees with new clarity that Christian faith, as traditionally held, involves a complicated and far from self-evident series of metaphysical affirmations. Indeed, propositions. (We have recently fought shy of the word propositions, anticipating what the philosophers would say. But I doubt that it can be avoided without a quite radical departure from tradition.) There are propositions about man's own nature and final destiny; propositions about creation, the world as a whole; propositions about a Divine Being, invisible yet seen by faith, omnipresent yet once incarnate, perfect and omnipotent, yet whose inscrutable purposes do not prevent evil and suffering.

And these are but the beginning. The better his instruction the better will a man grasp their complexity. But he may well feel something else as well: he can be in full agreement about the historical facts, even the very odd ones, and yet feel no compulsion, logical or moral or emotional, to accept this metaphysical framework which appears to be the believer's means of accounting for the facts. For facts like these, as theologians themselves have demonstrated, are patient of several accounts. And there are, for example, psychological and anthropological and even economic

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accounts as well as the ones of metaphysical theology. His natural inclination may be to choose what he thinks a more economical account.

All of this is familiar, part of the very atmosphere of these anti-metaphysical times. This is not the place to rehearse the story of this anti-metaphysical or simply unmetaphysical temper, And whether much contemporary philosophy is to be thought of as part of its cause, or as a reflection of it, it is very much a part of the story.

What is not uncertain is that the apologist is up against this temper in whatever form it happens to assume in different parts of our society. For it is a pervasive thing and not just the eccentricity of philosophers. Indeed, the apologist would probably be wiser to think of it as part of what Bonhoeffer called 'man's coming of age'. It is not likely to recede in the near future. Nor is it certain that it should be taken as necessarily anti-Christian. That will depend. But at present it most commonly sees Christianity as a system of belief which, like all other such systems, is compelled neither by the facts of man's outer nor of his inner world.

There are tendencies in contemporary theology, maybe powerful ones, which are not wholly unconnected with this temper. Like some recent moral philosophers whose cry has been for 'ethics without propositions', so there are theologians whose desire has been for something like 'theology without propositions'. Professor Mackinnon has reminded us of the proximity of certain types of modern philosophizing to what might be called the Christological positivism of Karl Barth. Professor Braithwaite bids us to see theological statements simply as declarations of moral policy. Professor Wisdom cautiously but profoundly examines a great deal of the logical background of theological language, without trying to say that it is 'nothing but' this or that. And in the more strictly theological world, every time we hear exhortations to return to the Biblical (and that means the Hebraic) conception of something or other, every time we hear words like 'activity' and 'event' strongly commended, we are moving in a world which wants to get away from metaphysics and the traditional forms in apologetic.

Whether these tendencies should be encouraged is not for me to say, but their relevance to this wide gulf separating believer from unbeliever ought to be traced out carefully. The existence of the gulf is recognized on both sides. In his efforts to talk across it, the apologist may find some comfort in the knowledge that he is not alone in feeling that the old language will not be heard so far away.

This leads to a second feature of our situation. It is similar, but has its own peculiarities. I mean the gulf which separates the ordinary practicing Christian and Churchman from the theologian and the theologically educated; or better, between their two theologies. None of us has to be told that at many points the two scarcely meet. But recent evidence of a semi-scientific kind was provided by the chapter on religion in Mr.

Geoffrey Gorer's exploration of the national character. We need not accept his rough and ready methods in order to accept the accuracy of some of his conclusions. We can guess well enough the result of applying the questionnaire method to an average congregation for the purpose of discovering the beliefs actually held about doctrines like Incarnation or Atonement or the Trinity. On the one hand we should probably find that Christian practice, moral or, broadly speaking, liturgical, can be taken very seriously, while at the same time doctrines—particularly in their metaphysical claims—fall into the background or out of sight. This may be one reason why it seems so easy in these days to hold extremely heretical views with impunity.

This gulf between what are sometimes called the popular and the reflective levels of theology is no new thing. At times special doctrines have been devised to account for and support it, like the old division of exoteric and esoteric. But there are factors in our contemporary professional theology which set it apart, even though there may be rough parallels. Much of it on one side is marked, understandably, by considerable hesitancy and tentativeness; and on another side much of it, in ecclesiastical affairs, is marked by a great concern for what, to the apologist, is peripheral. The tentativeness and eagerness to clear up misconceptions comes out in numberless discussions of Christian faith which are full of disclaimers of the form, 'We don't mean . . . ' this or that and conclude in vagueness. There is no denying the value of the disclaimer. After all, before redecorating a room it is a good thing to make sure that all the walls have been thoroughly cleaned. And, as in gardening, this preparatory work is blessedly straightforward. Decisions about how to redecorate or what to plant in the new border call for a rather different mental activity. In the end we simply have to make up our minds. But by continually finding patches which need more cleaning or weeding, we can postpone this decision almost indefinitely.

It is our misfortune that peripheral concerns are often newsworthy and therefore receive disproportionate attention. In the world of ecclesiastical affairs, how much time recently has been given to questions like that of the validity of ministries. Now it may be argued that questions like these are not peripheral at all, but central. And there is no doubt some sense in which this is true. But they are not central to the problem of closing the gap between academic theology and the actual beliefs of ordinary churchmen. If the wider apologetic task is to be fulfilled, the churchman must be better nourished than he usually is, and the highest priority must go to other sorts of questions. When a man wants to know what his Christian profession really amounts to, we shall serve him ill by appearing to prefer to talk about the intricacies of the doctrine of the ministry or, say, the necessity of Canon Law. Such discussion certainly has its place, but it will not help us to build up in the Church the trained capacity for giving

reasons for the faith which is in us. And it is the need for understanding which makes this second feature of our situation so serious. Whenever the churchman sees that his belief cuts no ice with his neighbours, he may begin to feel a hunger for an apologetic which takes seriously his own dissatisfaction and incapacity.

This points the way to a primary responsibility of the contemporary apologist. He must direct attention to, analyze, and state as clearly and candidly as possible the truly central difficulties which in our world beset every effort to interpret and commend Christian faith. There is in this as much of the prophetic as of the intellectual. We generally associate the prophetic spirit with protests, attempts to awaken conscience, on matters social or political or economic. But there is also an intellectual conscience to awaken and a need for protest against the superficial and the facile in theology and belief. We have seen hints of this sort of prophecy in those remarkable papers by the German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and in the French layman, Emmanuel Mounier. Outside the Church we have seen the same spirit at work in the writings of Simone Weil and even in the militantly non-Christian work of novelists like Camus. Such protests, like all prophecy, are not always well received. We should prefer reassurance and consolation, to be told that all is well. But despite many hopeful signs, all is not well. We know this, in apologetics, every time we use an argument or rehearse a conventional answer which we ourselves know to be weak, or worse than weak.

There is no need here to mention some of the ventures which are being made in equipping apologetic for its job, some full of promise. But I would like to suggest that if Christian apologetic is to be refashioned, we must be prepared to take unbelief much more seriously than is sometimes thought proper. More seriously in this sense: when we find it (and it is not unusual) in the thoughtful, the reflective and even the reverent, we cannot afford to treat it simply as something to be scored against and defeated. It must be seen as something in itself serious, and something which is perhaps of great importance and value in the eyes of God Himself. For it may stem not from sin or blindness but from divine judgment upon our own inadequacy. Frivolous, thoughtless, irresponsible unbelief, like the same varieties of belief, is another matter. And it may be less common than we suppose.

There is a parallel in contemporary philosophy. Not very long ago it was fashionable to consign a very great deal of earlier philosophy to the rubbish heap of the meaningless. There was a splendid technique for accomplishing this, the so-called Verification Principle, and it made a jolly game. But philosophical progress waited upon a change of attitude. It was not until certain sorts of philosophical speculation were taken seriously that their real strengths and weaknesses could be seen. Not until we bothered to look carefully not only at conclusions but at the questions

asked—and at the reasons why these questions were asked—could we be said to understand them. This is commonplace, but pertinent to the apologist's encounter with serious agnosticism. And thus far genuine encounter is only beginning.

I began by saying—and its truth is now apparent—that I had no new answers to the question of what it is to give reasons for the faith that is in us. There is nothing new about a feeling for the magnitude of the problem, and there are no short cuts. It may be that new apologists will have to feel with ever greater sensitivity what Wittgenstein called the poverty and the darkness of our time. Feel it until they become all but raw at the nerve ends.

They will also feel, and not without poignancy, the significance for themselves of the words in St. Luke: 'He spoke a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind' (vi, 39). But as might be pointed out, this is not the only saying in the Gospels about blindness. According to St. John, when some of the Pharisees asked, 'Are we blind also?' Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth' (ix, 40-41). This may be only the most minimal of comforts, but it is a hallmark of Christian experience. Not until we have lived with our admitted blindness, perhaps for a very long time, grown to know its hardships and bitterness, will we be able to receive sight at His hands. And in receiving it learn that it comes not as a natural right but as the free gift of His Grace.

REVIEWS

THEOLOGY AND LIFE*

This book is a collection of parochial sermons delivered by Bishop Henson while he was Bishop of Durham. It will be recalled that Lloyd George chose Henson for nomination to the bishoprick of Hereford because he wished to adorn the episcopal bench with a distinguished preacher. But his sermons up to now have always been regarded as meat for congregations of high intellectual calibre, and on that account not to be taken as models by the parochial clergyman or aspiring curate. This collection proves that Henson was not only a distinguished but also a great preacher. What he is quoted as saying of Dean Church's sermons may be aptly said of his own, 'They are quite excellent both in form and substance. You could not have a better model . . . In my judgment, by far the best instrument of teaching is exegesis' (p. 10). Of Henson's sermons it can also be said that they are free from the turgidity and sentimentalism to be found in those of Church, doubtless because those qualities belonged to the style and manners of the times. Henson eschewed all the tricks of oratory. His argument conforms to the canons of strict logic: every word is apt and necessary to his theme. Every sermon is an exposition of a text, while his illustrations are drawn from his wide reading and his application is always relevant to the concrete situation of the times.

They are not the sermons of a professional theologian, but of a religious Englishman with a sensitive but reserved disposition preaching to Englishmen. He accepts the paradoxes of the Christian tradition, content to reconcile them in an assured faith in God's ultimate victory. 'The Church of Christ is an anvil that has broken many hammers' is one of his favourite quotations. Nothing seems to have perplexed him more than the widening gulf between the claims of the Christian Church and its historical records. For he set forth with distinction the English emphasis on righteousness as the test of Christian belief. 'Unless we are right in ourselves, nothing has any religious value—not orthodoxy of belief, nor confidence of profession, nor activity in good works, nor success in ministry, nor popularity in the Church . . . All the whole system of the Church is designed for the securing of these two objects —making men genuinely Christians, and helping them to live Christianly' (p. 84).

How far Henson was prepared to go in the direction of liberal exposition may be judged from a sermon on the second advent. With unreserved frankness he states that the primitive expectation of the second advent is obsolete and archaic. But to allay the fears of any who might be disturbed by the idea that the Apostles could be mistaken, he points out (1) that the New Testament affirms that the Holy Spirit would teach the Church by trial and error, (2) that the illusion as to the nearness of the second advent stimulated hope and courage and 'prevented the Apostles from primitive action in organizing the Church'. He goes on to indicate (*a*) that the nature of the End is guaranteed by the character of the Incarnate, and (*b*) Christ judges men here and now by the witness of his own conscience.

There are two classes of preachers to-day, (1) those who preach to the times but fail to relate them to the Word of God, (2) those who preach the Word of God in

**Theology and Life*, by Herbert Hensley Henson. (A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd; price 10/6.)

the jargon of biblical theology. The former are intelligible without carrying any conviction: the latter are unintelligible and fail to communicate whatever conviction they have. Henson's sermons show that the Word of God can be proclaimed in our own day with conviction and in language intelligible to anyone who is ready to apply his mind to what the preacher has to say.

H. C. Snape

REFLECTIONS ON THE CANON LAW

'The Church has never been ruled by its Canons except for brief instants. Men collect themselves from time to time and formulate for eternity the standard of the hour, and as soon as it is fixed the stream sets away from it again.' Undeterred by the wisdom of these words of Archbishop Benson, the Church of England Convocations are now engaged in a revision of the Canon Law and there is a consequent revival of interest in an unfamiliar and long dormant subject. When the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield invited Canon Kemp of Exeter College, Oxford, to deliver the Lichfield Divinity Lectures in 1956, they asked him to take as his subject the Canon Law of the Church. The Lectures are now published under the title 'An Introduction to the Canon Law in the Church of England'.[1]

The Lectures are introductory not in the sense of being first steps in the study of the subject but rather in placing the present revision of Canon Law in the wider context of the medieval Canon Law and the practice of the Ecclesiastical Courts from the Reformation to the middle of the nineteenth century. Therin lies the chief value of these learned and interesting lectures on what, for most Churchmen, is an unfamiliar theme.

The reader is launched at the outset on a fascinating discussion of the validity of the medieval Canon Law in England and of the historical and legal controversy in which Stubbs and Maitland were involved. Canon Kemp shares with Maitland the view that the medieval Canon Law was binding on the English Courts. He touches all too lightly on the question of dispensations but more fully on the modification of the written law by contrary custom. Canon Kemp concludes his discussion of the medieval Canon Law with these words:

> 'The system of the medieval church in some ways produced anarchy, but it endeavoured to avoid tyranny so long as the fundamentals of the faith were not threatened. Its emphasis on moral principle combined with its respect for custom remind us of fundamental purposes of law which the modern desire for tidiness, efficiency, and uniformity may easily make us forget. There is something to be said for a complex and flexible system of jurisprudence, which will direct and educate, rather than a detailed written code which may easily strangle the Christian life.'

The second lecture introduces the reader to some of the leading figures in the development and practice of the Law of the Church in England with apt quotations from their writings and judgments. The third lecture illustrates from the practice of the Courts from the Reformation to the middle of the nineteenth century how the principles of the Canon Law were applied.

> 'The Ecclesiastical Law in England was not regarded as an isolated system, but as a part, albeit with its own special rules, of a much greater system and one which might be illuminated and assisted by works of canonists in other lands. Down to the second quarter of the nineteenth century Parliamentary statutes and the

[1] Published by Hodder & Stoughton. 1957, 8/6.

canons of Convocation covered only a part, and that scarcely the largest part, of the field in which the ecclesiastical lawyers moved. What seems to us a vague expression "the general Ecclesiastical Law", was something quite definite and emphatic to them because they were familiar with the jurisprudence of centuries, the traditional usage of Western Christendom.'

Canon Kemp shows how the dissolution of Doctors' Commons in 1861 and the consequent resort to Statute Law resulted in the collapse of the canonical tradition. He pleads for a recovery of a true understanding of the nature and function of Canon Law and he sees in the present revision an opportunity for the Church of England to recover its true inheritance in this respect. This brief but learned and persuasive book will help to promote this end.

We may ask, however, whether the disquiet, amounting in places to disgust and hostility, aroused by the present revision of Canon Law has not causes deeper than those which Canon Kemp discerns. It may certainly arise in part from the element of novelty, from ignorance and from the fact that the canonical tradition has been virtually lost. There is, however, more to it than that.

The question arises in many minds whether the life of the divine society can be regulated by rules to the degree and in the detail that a complete Code of Canons implies. There is the lurking fear that spontaneity, liberty and initiative will be stifled. The history of Christendom provides ample justification for this fear. Canons can become a straightjacket or a dead letter.

English people dislike unnecessary regulations and are deeply suspicious of an all-embracing code which can only be tolerable and workable when there are large powers of dispensation. This has been, and still is, the practice of the Roman Catholic Church. The system of dispensations, by which the Roman system is made tolerable, is repugnant to English Churchmen. But there is no practical alternative if a tight and comprehensive system of Canon Law is imposed and legalised. Speaking on this theme in a paper read to the Church Historical Society in 1895, the historian Bishop, Mandell Creighton, said:

'The ingenuity of Canonists was unfettered by any thought of the consequences of their conclusions, but it was comparatively easy to escape these consequences if desirable. It is of little practical purpose to study the Canon Law and to point to its precepts as the law of the Church binding for all time, if not revoked. As practically applied it was an ideal system, with little relation to life. It was a triumph of logical ingenuity which everyone regarded as admirable. Men in the middle ages loved law and could not have too much of it on paper. Our ideas have changed in modern times, and we dislike to live under regulations which are not observed by the community.'

These weighty words on the subject of Canon Law by one of the greatest of English bishops are worth pondering at the present time. They express part of the uneasiness which is felt at the attempt to impose a new Code of Canons.

Side by side with the revision of the Canon Law there is a movement for the overhauling and drastic re-modelling of the Church Courts. The machinery for enforcing the new Canons is already on the drawing-board. The Archbishop's Commission on Ecclesiastical Courts has completed its work and its report is now under consideration. Reviewing this report in the *Church of England Newspaper* (December 17th, 1954), Professor Norman Sykes says:

'Any supposition that the new Code of Canons (if it receives the Royal Assent) will constitute merely a book of rules for pastoral reference is dissipated by this Report. The reconstructed Courts are to *enforce* the revised Canons.'

There is no more to be said for antiquated Church Courts than for an antiquated Canon Law. But there is something to be said for the point of view so pungently expressed by the Editor of *Theology* (April 1956):

> 'No doubt, from time to time both Church Law and Church Courts need to be reformed, but the two reforms should not be synchronised if a wholesome flexibility is to be preserved. If you have an up-to-date system of Church Law, then it is desirable that the courts should be somewhat cumbersome or ineffective so that the law cannot be easily or rigidly enforced; if you have a streamlined system of Church Courts, then it is desirable that the law they are supposed to administer should be more or less obsolete. This suggestion can hardly be expected to be pleasing to lawyers, for whom we have a great respect, or to legalists, who are a menace anyhow, but it may not be displeasing to the Holy Ghost.'

A Code of Canons is best thought of as a storehouse of good advice. If the present revision were viewed in that light, there would be everything to be said in its favour, but an enforced and legalised code may lead to disaster. Creighton, in the paper to which we have referred, asserted that the most important fact in the history of the medieval church is that the accumulation of good advice was ingeniously constructed into a legal system and was administered as such. It could only be administered by wholesale (and often scandalous) dispensations. It was the persistent extension of this system of accommodation which seemed to have no limits that gave a moral force to the explosions of the sixteenth century.

These considerations do not arise directly out of Canon Kemp's excellent lectures, though they are prompted by them. The conclusion of the matter can best be stated in Canon Kemp's own words at the end of his second lecture:

> 'More than most systems the Law of the Church must rest upon moral authority rather than coercion and those who administer it must have large minds.'

W. G. Fallows

PROFESSOR JULIAN HUXLEY AND HIS RELIGION*

The market for religious books is cluttered with ephemeral literature produced to refurbish and restate some aspect of orthodox theology rather than to express the results of creative reflection. It should therefore warm the hearts of any who despair of the future of creative faith to learn that there has been such a demand both in this country and America for J. S. Huxley's *Religion Without Revelation* which was first published nearly thirty years ago that it has now appeared in a new and revised edition.

The book on its first appearance was reviewed in the *Modern Churchman* (Vol. XVII. Nos. 9 and 10, January 1928) by J. C. Hardwick, whose appreciation and criticism remain unimpaired although written nearly thirty years ago. Both Huxley's book and Hardwick's review demonstrate the absurdity of the dismissal of liberalism as out-moded and obsolete. Professor Huxley tells us that his experience of the thirty years since *Religion Without Revelation* first appeared has impressed three relevant considerations upon him: (1) the importance of 'over-all idea-systems'. (2) The present need for ideological unification. He makes the point that 'our Western idea-systems are vulnerable because they are insufficiently united to possess any powerful intrinsic driving force . . . But so long as their dualistic splits persist between natural and supernatural, between God and the world, between matter and spirit—

* *Religion Without Revelation*, by Julian Huxley, published by Max Parrish, London, new and revised edition, price 21/-.

so long will our Western civilisation be schizophrenic in the original sense of that term, so long will our idea-systems fail to provide much of a dynamic for truly purposeful action' (p. viii). (3) The need to increase knowledge and make our comprehension ever more comprehensive. 'For,' he states, 'keeping up with the facts is an essential for any enduring idea-system: only by incorporating new facts and new modes of organizing knowledge can idea-systems remain effective organs of man in society. For do not let us forget that, in the long run, all that deserves to be called *Progress* in man's history depends either directly or indirectly on new comprehension—new facts or new interpretations, new knowledge or new organizations of knowledge' (p. ix). What the world needs in Professor Huxley's estimation is 'an essentially religious idea-system, unitary instead of dualistically split, and charged with the total dynamic of knowledge old and new, objective and subjective, of experience scientific and spiritual' (p. ix).

Almost everyone would agree with his first two points; his remedy for our spiritual schizophrenia seems to stand in need of further elucidation. It may even be doubted whether it is based on correct assumptions. Knowledge and comprehension lack the driving force of those potent desires and instincts which are at the root of all religions bad and good. The communist idea-system of Marxist Russia has lost its driving force not so much because the empirical sciences have proved its synthesis intellectually inadequate, as asserted by Professor Huxley, as because it has failed to satisfy Messianic expectations so that the ancient tribal god of nationalism has had to come to its support and in large measure supplanted it.

Professor Huxley looks to the sciences of comparative religion and religious psychology as purgatives of religion. Up to now, the science of comparative religion has consisted of descriptions rather than valuation because no accepted standard has yet been devised by which religions can be valued. Now however that the world is becoming one, it looks as if the religion of the future will evolve from the viable elements of the religions of the world not through conscious syncretism but through the forces of experience. Its growth is likely to resemble that of the traditional Christian theology, i.e. by a gradual and natural process of accretion and assimilation. Religious psychology can only interpret and analyse: it cannot estimate and value. This is why with Hardwick we cannot accept Huxley's dismissal of revelation and the God-hypothesis. If the deliverances of revelation are to be taken as self-authenticating and self-evident theological postulates, the Modernist will whole-heartedly agree that they do not impose acceptance. But the mystical and prophetic vision cannot be judged by its psychological mechanism but only by its creative power in the realm of thought and action.

A new chapter deals with science and God. The greater part of it is taken up with an account of the history of religion as seen by a biologist. No-one would deny that those religions which have refused to modify their structure to meet changes in thought and living lose their vitality. 'Authoritarian dogmas and revelations resemble the Struldbrugs of *Gulliver's Travels* in being condemned to an uncomfortable survival long after their original vigour and significance has been exhausted. Luckily, however, they differ from Struldbrugs in not being immortal. They *can* die—though usually their death is belated, so that they have kept their youthful competitors in the world of ideas out of their rightful place far too long' (p. 51).

Professor Huxley seems to regard belief in God as a purely intellectual hypothesis, and unfortunately traditional theology with its intellectual emphasis seems to support this idea. But to the believer God is not a metaphysical entity, but the centre and object of his worship which colours all his other beliefs. It is a belief which arises from his interior personality, and for its object cannot be satisfied with less than what

is personal. The besetting temptation of the religious man is to reduce God to an individual in his characteristics, changeable in His operations, a 'person' in the sense in which the title is applied to a human being. This is no doubt what Professor Huxley has in mind when he states that the scientific method has destroyed the God-hypothesis. He hardly seems to be aware that both history and psychology show that in any struggle between abstract ideas and beliefs in persons the latter will prevail. Napoleon, Stalin, and Hitler all tell the same tale. All good republicans secretly envy monarchies. The strongest influence upon any person is another person. If therefore personality is the most powerful influence in human experience, a religion without God seems hardly likely to hold the future. Man will still require the object of his worship to possess that dynamic which belongs to personality; he will have to recognise that the more detached he is in his religious reflections, the more does his god become an abstract idea. This necessary balance between enthusiastic faith and detached thought is to be found in the Christianity of the New Testament, particularly as it is found in the Pauline Epistles and the Johannine literature.

Professor Huxley speaks of his religion as a naturalistic type of belief or a developed religion, really implying a religion which has been purged of supernaturalism and superstition. Liberals of all schools have for many years now pointed to the contradiction between our present knowledge of the workings of the natural world and the orthodox assumption that the spiritual resembles nature by consisting of objects similar in form but supernatural in substance. But the spiritual can be regarded as real if not supernatural: words and imagery may signify the relationship between the spiritual and ourselves. Naturalism is a methodological assumption and can never be proved an absolute universal axiom. Professor Huxley admits that 'there seems to be a good case for the existence of such "super-normal phenomena" as clairvoyance and telepathy, as well as plenty of undoubted automatic writing, hypnotic phenomena, etc., but,' he goes on, 'these have nothing to do with spiritualism in the sense of communicating with the spirits of the departed.' Professor Huxley seems to make the common error of failing to differentiate between spiritualism and psychical research. Spiritualism is a faith and a belief in spirit survival after death with the will to believe that any claim to be evidence of survival is to be accepted at its face-value. Psychical research is the scientific investigation of all super-normal phenomena, and is only prepared to entertain spirit-survival as a hypothesis demanding such verification as may be proper and satisfying. Two safe conclusions from psychical research seem to emerge (1) that the assumptions of physics concerning mass and motion cannot be made in investigating these phenomena. That is of course why they are super-normal and explains the inverted commas which Professor Huxley gives to the word; (2) that 'nature' and 'the natural world' is only that part of the universe to which our senses are adapted. As Professor Huxley states, religion is concerned with our destiny; if we are rooted in a universe only part of which is accessible to our senses, religion is bound to take account of this fact.

Religion Without Revelation amounts to a religious philosophy rather than a philosophy of religion. Professor Huxley has sympathetically stated why the thoughtful scientist cannot accept the claims of traditional theology: at the same time he is fully aware that religion has an indispensable function in the life of a civilised community. He accurately diagnoses the spiritual malaise of Europe as schizophrenic which only a resurrection of faith will heal. In the words with which J. C. Hardwick concluded his review thirty years ago is Christianity the religion which is causing the schizophrenia? 'That, of course, is the question. Some of its official exponents wish to make it so; but things are what they are, and not what some people choose to represent them as being.' (Op. cit. p. 595.)

H. C. Snape

SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS*

The 'battle of the Scrolls' still goes on, and the literature which it is generating grows steadily more immense and unmanageable. Much of this writing is of a specialist nature; what has been produced for public consumption has sometimes been of a flamboyant character, concerned more to bring out the 'romantic' aspect of the discoveries and to exploit any sensational possibilities that they might be thought to have, especially in relation to the origins of Christianity. It is, accordingly, refreshing to find that Professor Bruce has produced a very readable account of these Dead Sea Scrolls and the problem of their interpretation which is both accurate and comprehensive. With this book as a guide the ordinary layman will be well informed about the nature of the Scrolls, the circumstances of their discovery, and the opinions which scholars so far have expressed about their origin, the community which once owned them, and their bearing upon Biblical studies. On the now well-known points at issue Professor Bruce raises the question whether the Teacher of Righteousness could have been Judah Ben-Gedidiah; he thinks that on the evidence at present available the Wicked Priest was probably Alexander Jannaeus; the Qumrân community he would tentatively identify with that sect of the Essenes which, according to Josephus, permitted its members to be married.

From the Christian point of view the most significant question is that of the relationship, if any, of the Qumrân community and its peculiar beliefs to the original Palestinian form of Christianity. Professor Bruce takes the line which has generally been taken so far by Christian scholars about this issue. Accordingly he maintains that the Qumrân Teacher of Righteousness cannot be regarded either in person or in what his followers believed about him as a prototype of Jesus Christ. His reasons for holding this view are briefly that the Teacher of Righteousness was not regarded as the Messiah, and that he was not believed to have risen from the dead.

In seeking thus to answer the question of the bearing of the Qumrân discoveries on Christian Origins, Professor Bruce shows the same inability, revealed by so many other Christian scholars, to realise that the portrait of Jesus, which is presented in the Gospels, is a post-A.D. 70 composition, which means that it was put together after the obliteration of the original Christian community of Jerusalem consequent on the Jewish national overthrow in A.D. 70. To assume that the death of Jesus was interpreted soteriologically by the Jewish Christians of Palestine before that time is to ignore Paul's testimony to the fundamental cleavage which existed between his interpretation of the nature and rôle of Jesus and that propounded by the Jerusalem Church. As a matter of fact the Qumrân community's failure to interpret the death of their Teacher of Righteousness soteriologically confirms the evidence which indicates that to the original Jewish disciples of Jesus his violent death constituted a serious objection to his Messianic status and had to be explained away by finding Scriptual warranty, e.g., in the figure of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah liii.

Further, in setting forth the Messianic claims of Jesus as evidence of distinction from the Qumrân evaluation of the Teacher of Righteousness, the assumption is made by Professor Bruce and others that the original movement which centred about Jesus in Palestine was pacifist in intent and had nothing to do with the national cause of Jewish freedom from the yoke of heathen Rome. It is truly amazing how Christian scholars will persist in both refusing to see the essential improbability of such a situation and in ignoring the definite evidence which exists against it. And it is equally amazing how they seem to be convinced that the cause of Christianity is better served by representing Jesus as indifferent to the justice of his people's cause

**Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, by F. F. Bruce. (The Paternoster Press, 1956, pp. 144; 10/6.)

against their foreign Roman oppressors—indeed why should it be thought necessary that Jesus should have been unpatriotic, unless it be to conform to the dogmatic requirements of a soteriology which was formulated later and in response to a very different situation? The fact that after A.D. 70 the Mother Church of Jerusalem, which had hitherto been the controlling centre and fount of authority to the new faith, completely disappeared is surely proof enough that the original Christian community in the holy city was involved in the common lot of the nation.[1] And in this connection the fate of the Qumrân community is surely significant. Although this community in many respects organised itself apart from the ordinary life of the Jewish people, as did the Palestinian Christians, convincing evidence was found by Father de Vaux when he excavated its settlement at Qumrân that, probably in A.D. 68, it had been attacked and destroyed by Roman troops, undoubtedly because it was regarded as implicated in the Jewish revolt.

In the view of the present writer the bearing of the evidence of the Qumrân discoveries on the subject of Christian Origins has not yet been properly evaluated owing to the preoccupation of scholars with the post-A.D. 70 picture of Christianity, which is a tendentious presentation occasioned by the position in which the Church outside Palestine found itself after the disappearance of the Mother Church of Jerusalem in the Jewish national overthrow. A proper appreciation of Jewish Christianity prior to A.D. 70 will surely reveal the true proportions of the relevance of the Qumrân discoveries in this vitally important connection.[2]

S. G. F. Brandon

*SOTERIOLOGICAL STRAIGHTJACKET

> 'Sometimes this work of Our Lord as our teacher and revealer of truth has been thought to contain all Christian revelation about the Cross. Master Peter Abelard and Dr. Hastings Rashdall sought to interpret (or reinterpret, or discard) all the language of the New Testament in this light. It may be said that the attempt failed: the New Testament sources cannot be fitted into this straitjacket.'

So says the Rev. Owen Chadwick in his address (p. 120-121) entitled 'Christus Victor' in *Good Friday at St. Margaret's*.

When I was Chaplain to one of Her Majesty's Prisons twenty years or so ago, it was my painful duty to pay a daily visit to men confined in the straitjacket for minor offences. It was a complete waste of time. The right response to the Grace of God on the part of a man in those circumstances was a total impossibility.

With two notable exceptions, the addresses contained in this book leave me with the impression of having been confined for some hours in a theological straitjacket. The two exceptions are the addresses of the Regius Professor of Divinity in Cambridge, the Rev. John Burnaby ('Forgiveness in Christ'), and Professor C. F. D. Moule's.

[1]This fact clearly attests the legendary character of the account given by Eusebius and Epiphanius that the Christian community of Jerusalem escaped to Pella in Transjordan; Professor Bruce cites this account without any critical commentary; cf. S. G. F. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*, pp. 168-173, 263-4.

[2]See the present writer's appendix on 'The Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls' in the second edition of his book, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*, which is shortly to be published by the S.P.C.K.

**Good Friday at St. Margaret's.* Three Hour Addresses (1956). (A. R. Mowbray, 1957; 7/6.)

In these there are some extremely valuable contributions to our understanding of our Lord's Passion and Death. I venture to select three:

(1) 'It is the sinner's mind that must be changed, and the mere outward fact of Christ's obedience unto death does not suffice to change it. Few of us, I think, can nowadays be content with the idea that the sacrifice of Christ is a substitute for one which we can never make for ourselves' (p. 144).

(2) 'The question to ask in face of distress is never "Why?" (unless, indeed, by asking it one can reach some practical measure of constructive action), but always "How?" How, in these circumstances, may God be glorified? What is it that God is saying to us by this judgment which has overtaken the society of which I am a component part?'

(3) 'Everyone is afraid of physical death: and the man who delivers from physical death we naturally admire.

No one is naturally afraid of spiritual death. We are not afraid of sin. Our hearts do not naturally respond to that delivery which Christ died to bring. He had to save us from what we were too far gone to feel. . . . The death of Christ, then, is not only a display—for we do not observe the display. It is not only an example—for we do not follow the example. It must be inseparable from a power which *creates,* which creates in us the capacity to respond to the display and to seek to follow the example' (p. 127).

All that is finely said and shows that these theologians still acknowledge their debt to the 'moral influence' theories which most of the other writers in this series seem to despise. One of the contributors reminds us that the best commentary on Scripture is Scripture. This remark, coupled with the strong tincture of Barthianism in Mr. Williams' address

('We can achieve nothing of ourselves . . . our only hope lies in what Christ in his merciful goodness is ready to give us').

puts us back into the soteriological straitjacket indeed. The same writer appears to project a post-crucifixion interpretation into the pre-crucifixion saying of Jesus about 'taking up the cross' (p. 52), and accepts the incident of the effusion of 'blood and water' from the wounded side of Christ as a fact, as indeed he is quite at liberty to do. But when he tells us that we cannot 'have the living water unless we are prepared to come and receive it at Calvary as it pours from the wounded side of Jesus' (p. 54), this is a piece of assumption and forced symbolism which is quite unacceptable.

From this and a great deal else that was preached at St. Margaret's, Westminster, last Good Friday, and which brought back very thinly disguised substitutionary theories of Atonement, I turn once more with relief and a sense of release to Master Peter Abelard whom our Biblical theologians now damn with such faint praise.

'Our redemption, therefore, is that supreme love of Christ shown to us by His passion, which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but acquires for us the true liberty of the sons of God . . . so that kindled by so great a benefit of divine grace, charity should not be afraid to endure anything for His sake.'

I shall conclude with an adaptation of some words of the poet Shelley. 'I had rather be damned with Origen, Abelard and Hastings Rashdall than go to heaven with certain theologians of the "post-critical school".'

F. M. Moyle

BOOKS RECEIVED

The following books have been received. Inclusion in this list does not mean that they will not be reviewed at a later date.

British Philosophy in the Mid-century, edited by C. A. Mace. Published by Allen & Unwin; price 30/-.
Faith and Logic, edited by Basil Mitchell. Allen & Unwin; 21/-.
Dattatreya: The Way and the Goal. Allen & Unwin; 21/-.
Manchester Public Libraries Reference Library Subject Catalogue, Section 929: Genealogy Part 2, Parish Registers Wills; 17/6.
The Authority of Scripture, by John K. S. Reid. Methuen & Co.; 25/-.
Relations between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches. S.P.C.K.; 3/6.
Insight, by B. J. F. Lonergan. Longmans Green & Co.; 63/-.
The Man from Tarsus, by H. F. A. Eurich. Montgomeryshire Printing Co.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the *Modern Churchman*

THE MINISTRY OF E. A. EDGHILL

Sir,

I have just read your account of the short life of E. A. Edghill. During his last years I knew him very well. I met him directly after I took up the Headmastership of Strand School, then a part of King's College, London. I found two of his boys in the school and we immediately became intimately acquainted with each other. When he was dismissed from the Sub-wardenship of St. Saviour's College he came straight to me and I was able to offer him, at once, the post of head of my Classics. He had already done some weeks' work with us before he took his boys on their camping holiday. Even in that short time he had made an enormous impression on boys and masters alike. He might have made a truly great headmaster.

I felt that God had dealt us a grievous blow when I was called back from my own climbing holiday to attend his funeral. I well remember Miss E. H. Young, the authoress, who was also a member of our large party, saying to me, 'Why has God done that?' Edghill and I were—or so we thought—going to do so much work together.

Your mention of 'Boy Scouts' hardly does justice to the story of Edghill House. He opened his doors to boys whose homes were bad and brought them up as his own sons. That is how I came to know him: eventually Edghill House became a Boarding House of Strand School. He spent all his money on those boys, and he was often hard put to it to make ends meet. He told me that at one time, after prodigious efforts, he thought that he was at last out of debt, when his housekeeper brought him a forgotten bill for £34 3s. 4d. for furniture. He prayed about this bill, and a few days later an unknown lady called on him and told him that she had been so much impressed by a sermon that she had heard him preach that she had made enquiries and found out about his boys' house. She had gone round with a collecting box, and she then presented him with a cheque for £34 3s. 4d.

R. B. Henderson

University College of North Staffordshire,
Keele,
Staffordshire
April 9th, 1957

THE CHURCHMANSHIP OF JOHN INGLESANT

Sir,

On p. 203 of the double number of the *Modern Churchman* it is stated in a quotation from Alfred Fawkes that the author of *John Inglesant* was a Nonconformist. This is strange, as J. H. Shorthouse was Churchwarden of St. John's, Ladywood, from 1864 to 1869 and one of the founders of the Church School. His house 'Inglesant', soon to be pulled down, is still here. I am sure Shorthouse would want this corrected—he was obviously a most enthusiastic Church member.

Ladywood Vicarage, N. S. Power
Birmingham, 16.
March 25th, 1957.

The following letter, written some 27 years ago, elucidates the Rev. Norman Power's contention.

Sir,

May I be forgiven if I point out a small inaccuracy in the passage quoted by you in your interesting *In Memoriam* of Alfred Fawkes in the November 1930 number of the *Modern Churchman,* page 439.

John Henry Shorthouse at the time he wrote *John Inglesant* was an ardent member of the Church of England.

I am not sure of the exact time when he was received into the Church, but it must have been before 1864. In that year one of my sisters was born, and Mr. and Mrs. Shorthouse asked my parents (who were some of their greatest friends) to allow them to become her godparents. Mr. Shorthouse told my mother that he had first been attracted to the Church by the beauty of the Baptism service, and he had a great wish to be a godfather himself, as he had no children of his own. He had been influenced by Canon Morse (afterwards Rector of St. Mary's, Nottingham) before this time, and had been received and baptized into the Church.

I was born in 1861, and I well remember hearing him speak of the book he was writing, when I was a big schoolgirl, and he used to bring the chapters as he wrote them to read to my mother.

He was an enthusiastic Churchman, and did a great deal of Church work in the parish, though he always kept on very friendly terms with his Quaker friends and relations.

John Inglesant was only intended for private circulation among his friends, but Mr. MacMillan saw it and begged to be allowed to publish it.

Mendip House, Ellen Hume-Rothery
Headington Hill,
Oxford.
1930.